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Foreign/Second Language Pedagogy Research  
A Commemorative Volume for Claus Færch

Edited by  
Robert Phillipson, Eric Kellerman,  
Larry Selinker, Michael Sharwood Smith  
and Merrill Swain

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## CLAUS FÆRCH 1948-1987

Robert Phillipson, Eric Kellerman, Larry Selinker, Michael Sharwood Smith and Merrill Swain

The focus of this book is on foreign and second language pedagogy research, a field to which Claus Færch made a lasting contribution. Claus's influence was widespread: the articles have been written as a tribute to his memory by colleagues and friends in his home country, Denmark, in the rest of Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden) and Finland, in Great Britain, Holland and the Federal Republic of Germany, in Canada, the USA, and Israel. Professionally these scholars span a range of interests: applied linguistics, second language acquisition, foreign language pedagogy (on the second/foreign distinction, see Phillipson's article in Section One of this volume), psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics. Some are more concerned with theory, others with teacher training, but most strive to integrate theory with the promotion of good language learning. Some are immigrants, operating daily in a second language; others come from the dominant group in their country of residence: of these, some are concerned with the teaching and learning of their mother tongue, while others teach foreign languages. What brings them together is an urge to celebrate a scholar who contributed in his brief life to all the areas already mentioned. The result is a work which offers a rich distillation of studies in the wide field of foreign and second language learning.

The introductions to each of the five sections which make up the book present the articles in that section and relate them to Claus Færch's contribution to the areas in question. With the exception of the first section, which brings together a set of articles on applied linguistics in a historical perspective, these represent the main areas in which Claus worked, namely learner language, learning processes and strategies, classroom research, and pragmatics. (There is a complete list of Claus's publications at the end of the book.) The purpose of this general

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introduction is to present a brief outline of why scholars interested in second and foreign language learning and teaching can learn from Claus's example.

Claus was a dedicated researcher, a constant source of inspiration to colleagues and students at the English Department of the University of Copenhagen, to many schoolteachers, and to the international scientific community. He was also a pedagogue in the best sense of the term, in consonance with the original Greek meaning someone who is responsible for the young and teaches them. It so happens that the Danish cognate 'pædagog' has none of the pejorative connotations, of pedantry or dogmatism, which the English word sometimes has.

Claus wished to relate the study of English at Copenhagen University more closely to the reality of the school classrooms that most graduates would spend their working lives in. This position represented a radical break with the philological-literary tradition which held sway at universities in Denmark until the 1970s. The PIF project (Project in Foreign language pedagogy), to which most of Claus's publications and teaching were originally linked, involved teamwork between researchers, students, and practising language teachers. Each contributed in all the main phases of the work, from the conceptualisation of the problems to be researched to the practical follow-up of research results. The ongoing research was integrally linked to activities ranging from the pre-service and in-service training of teachers to international collaboration with scholars working on related topics. Claus was a model researcher and pedagogue in that he made a productive, creative impact on many people.

As someone interested in theory, he was rigorous in pursuing scientific quality. What one can demand of valid theory has recently been analysed by McLaughlin (1987: 18) in relation to current work in second-language learning:

Good theories fit the data well, are consistent with related formulations, and clear in their predictions, and are heuristically rich. Perhaps most important of all, they are capable of disconfirmation.

Because of the relatively crude state of scientific knowledge and methodology in the area of foreign language pedagogy research in the mid-1970s, the empirical work of the PIF project on the learning of English by Danes was launched before an adequate theoretical framework had been evolved. However, the project was sufficiently explicit methodologically and well conceived to permit valid analysis of a range of parameters, some traditional (lexis, syntax and phonology), some more innovative (particularly communication strategies and pragmatics). This



formative phase of Claus's career could be described as fitting into the pattern of 'research-then-theory' (Long, 1985). However, as Claus's development as a researcher indicates, for instance in the first major products, *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication* (Færch & Kasper, 1983b) and *Learner Language and Language Learning* (Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson, 1984), he was deeply involved in theory development as well as empirical research. His work thus embodied the merging of empirical research and theory that Lightbown's survey of the field regards as the optimal blend (1987b: 137).

McLaughlin's prescriptions for scientific scholarship tally closely with Gabriele Kasper's description of what it was like to work closely with Claus:

His thinking was creative and systematic, analytic and integrative. He was good at spotting the weaknesses in his fellow researchers' work and formulating his criticism constructively and gently. He was a willing listener to criticism of his own work and profited from the suggestions made by others. He was sceptical of easy solutions and willing to develop and accept new insights. (*In memoriam*, in Færch & Kasper, 1987a).

As someone interested in the practice of teaching and learning, Claus was fully aware of the fragmentary state of scientifically founded knowledge in the area, despite the advances in linguistics, psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology of recent decades. We can refer to McLaughlin (1987) again, in the concluding remarks to his book, in relation to the application of research findings:

At this point, research and theory cannot act as sources of prescriptions about teaching procedures. There are still too many gaps in our knowledge, especially of individual difference variables and social factors that play important roles in classroom practice. This is not to deny the potential relevance of theory and research for second-language teaching. Ultimately, teaching benefits by sound understanding of the processes involved in second-language learning. (McLaughlin, 1987: 165).

Claus did not wish to 'prescribe teaching procedures', but he did want teachers and student teachers to have a questioning attitude to what took place in classrooms, and to benefit from theory of whatever origin, educational, psychological or linguistic. His research was motivated by an intense urge to shed light on the complex processes of language learning and thereby to contribute to more successful language learning experiences. The topics he chose to investigate in a theoretically informed

way were central to the practice of language learning, meaning that he always had a ready audience of practitioners anxious to subject their current 'teaching procedures' to scrutiny. As the research evolved in interaction with classroom learners and teachers, there was never any risk that Claus's research would not be of immediate relevance to the language teaching profession. This does not in any way imply that the relationship between theoretically explicit research and educational practice is a simple or direct one.

Lightbown (1987b: 138) stresses that adequate theories of language acquisition must draw not only on linguistics, psychology and neurology, but also on sociology, a position that Claus would have endorsed and possibly added education and ethnography. His research might well have aimed at integrating wider social dimensions, if his health had not failed him, since his vision of what foreign language pedagogy research could and should consist of was not restricted to reformist or technocratic horizons. In a paper entitled 'Fremmedsprogpædagogisk forskning og formidling' ('Research in foreign language pedagogy and its communication', Færch, 1982), written when cutbacks were about to condemn this field to the periphery of the English degree at Copenhagen University, he wrote:

When the relationship between research and teaching is debated in the media, it is usually taken for granted that for teaching to be conducted at an appropriately high level presupposes that it is dependent on ongoing involvement in research. The opposite position, that research could be dependent on close involvement in teaching or equivalent activity, is not so often discussed . . . To state that university students and teachers of foreign languages should participate in the formulation of which problems should be taken up in research in foreign language pedagogy is, naturally, not the same as saying that such research should exclusively or even mainly deal with what are experienced as problems by the people in question. In this connection it is important to note that all research, because of its dynamic nature, serves to generate new problems, which are genuine, socially relevant ones to pursue. Equally, it is one of the main traditional goals of universities to question the premisses according to which our societies function. The researcher in foreign language pedagogy can therefore not be content with working with problems which are formulated on the basis of the status quo. It is inescapably necessary that research in foreign language pedagogy should acknowledge its identity as humanistic-social research and in keeping with this should seek to

formulate problems on the basis of the researchers' alternative ideas, expressed as social utopias. (Færch, 1982: 61-2, our translation)

Although one cannot claim that Claus Færch's research paradigm was explicitly related to any social utopia, there is no doubt that he was a scholar of vision. In the longer term he would have been keen to use his influence in the wider arena of language policy in Denmark and principles of teacher training. Foreign language teaching has significant social functions. Even if it seldom generates the intense controversy that second language teaching does (e.g. in relation to the education of indigenous or immigrant minorities), it needs enlightened analysis and creative re-thinking. Claus Færch's work contributed significantly to this.

References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.



## SECTION ONE

### APPLIED LINGUISTS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The impetus to look at applied linguists retrospectively came from words of tribute paid to Claus Færch in the journal *Applied Linguistics* (1987, volume 8(3)) after his premature death:

Claus was in the great tradition of Danish anglicists, the Jespersen tradition, with interests ranging from philology through theoretical linguistics to language teaching.

Various aspects of this great tradition will be explored by considering the work of some seminal applied linguists in a historical perspective. Claus Færch was deeply familiar with our founding texts and saw clearly what they might teach us. For instance there is a direct line between Corder's (1967) classic paper on 'The significance of learners' errors' and Færch's own *Learner Language and Language Learning* (Færch, Haastруп & Phillipson, 1984). Claus was interested in founding texts for what they can still teach us today about second and foreign language learning and teaching, and it is in this spirit that we begin the first section of this volume.

It is important to note that we are not interested in embracing the past merely in order to challenge it. The perspective we are trying to achieve involves looking at some original sources in the spirit of the historian Dominic Le Capra's observation that 'a field is in constant dialogue with its founding texts'. We are thus not interested in history *per se* but rather in linking up some central founding texts of our field with current knowledge, as this is interpreted and understood by contributors to this section of the volume. By drawing out some of these links across time, we are attempting to make the dialogue with our sources explicit.

Applied linguistics is a field that has not been intensively cultivated for very long, though as Gregersen's article shows, its roots can be firmly

traced back over two centuries. In addition to such a broad historical canvas, the field can be analysed in relation to its own internal evolution, as Selinker's contribution demonstrates; in relation to some of the external pressures which led to its formation and to some characteristics of its identity, as in Phillipson's paper; and in relation to an outstandingly fertile figure on its landscape, as in Davies's paper. Our hope is that these sample dialogues with founding 'texts' of applied linguistics will reveal something of the historical complexity of the field. There is a definite need among professional applied linguists for a heightened awareness of our historical and scientific origins.

As an example of historical myopia, it is worth pondering over why language transfer was thrown out wastefully, in 'baby and bathwater' fashion, for a good decade. Any reflections on this theme are likely to be none too flattering, for it appears that researchers, as well as teachers, do in fact jump on bandwagons. A possible reason is failure to work in a dialectical way. As regards transfer, we did not dialogue with Lado's masterly work *Linguistics Across Cultures* (Lado, 1957). His work was dismissed. We allowed ourselves to take too literally statements of the kind that appear throughout his volume: 'If X, then the learner will do Y', and threw out Lado. Yet his work has exerted a crucial, durable influence, either as synthesis or antithesis. A 'purposeful misreading' of a Lado claim of this sort would include statements such as: 'If X', then the learner *might* do Y' (which, to be fair, is a formulation used at times by Lado). To avoid bandwagon and baby/bathwater effects, it is helpful to do this 'purposeful misreading' exercise in depth. When applied to Lado's work, some highly topical hypotheses emerge, often unexpectedly, among them hypotheses that have not been formulated in the literature (for more details, see Selinker, in preparation).

In the first paper in this section, Gregersen takes us back to the beginning of the nineteenth century and reveals that early applied linguists shared many of our own concerns. These pioneers are placed firmly in their historical and social context, nationally and internationally, as are their successors, from Otto Jespersen to Claus Færch. The tasks carried out by the applied linguist, then as now, reflect the ongoing movement of theory. The article traces applied linguists through the history of ideas from the enlightenment and national romanticism via comparative philology and structuralism to sociolinguistics and socially decontextualised theories of language. The description of Danish scholars and social developments reveals that Denmark was, and perhaps still is, in many respects a 'typical' Western country, with complex internal and external pressures. In tandem with the development of theory go practical concerns,

from spelling reform to speech pathology and foreign language teaching. Here it is important to know what factors constitute the dominant tradition, and identify on what theoretical and social foundations this tradition rests. This is an issue which is followed up in depth in relation to contemporary classroom language learning in papers in the second half of the book.

The second paper in the section, by Selinker, compares the early language transfer experiments by the Americans, Nemser and Brière. It looks at what they did in their very innovative work, their results, where the two sources are the same, where different, and what their results might mean in the light of current thinking on language transfer. The exact place of language transfer in the second language process, given the concerns of universal grammar and the enormous variability and incompleteness that are now universally recognised, is still a most current issue. Selinker's paper shows the importance of returning to earlier sources for insights into today's questions.

The paper by Phillipson directly addresses the question of 'founding texts'. It quotes a number of recent critical assessments of the adequacy of our methodologies, by both Western and Third World scholars. It specifically analyses the use of the labels 'second' and 'foreign' in order to highlight the diversity of contexts they refer to and to question whether research methods or teaching traditions can be 'exported' in a relevant way to different contexts. Historical analysis of how applied linguistics and worldwide English teaching were deliberately built up by British and American interests in the post-war period, in order to achieve specific goals, uncovers something of the political agenda of our profession. An increased awareness of the political context of our work and of our historical and scientific roots can help us to understand how we got where we are and why we believe what we do about what we study and teach.

One source that all of us must plead dependence on is S. Pit Corder. The final paper in this section, by Davies, discusses Corder's seminal influence and shows how relevant much of his thinking still is. The framework for this study of Corder and his associates at Edinburgh is the familiar one of the relationship between theory and practice, and the question of which comes first in applied linguistics, linguistic theory or practical problems such as language teaching. An interesting comparison between North American and British traditions identifies Corder's major significance in both contexts. This is an appropriate way to end this historical section, in view of Claus Færch's strong links with Edinburgh, where he was a student for two years, and with Corder, who played a

major role in establishing applied linguistics as a theoretically explicit research and teaching activity in Scandinavia.

#### Note

1. This is an insight from Harold Garfinkel, who points out that one cannot directly apply ethnomethodology to concerns of second language acquisition, primarily because change (possible acquisition) and non-change (possible fossilisation) over time are central variables for us, whereas they are usually not included in ethnomethodological studies.

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## Relationships Between Linguistics and Applied Linguistics: Some Danish Examples

Frans Gregersen

### Introduction

Linguistic knowledge may be applied to a host of problems. The most important ones are either concerned with remediating pathological states as to speaking or understanding or focussed on education. Within the first sphere we find subjects and professional specialties such as speech therapy, remediating reading difficulties and the application of linguistic knowledge to sign language. Educating the public is the task of language planning, e.g. reforming orthographies, proposing new terminology and creating norms for efficient communication in society at large. More specific are mother tongue teaching and foreign language pedagogy, two areas that have loomed large in all descriptions of applied linguistics, the last one to the extent that it has tended to become synonymous with it.

In what follows I shall present an overview of how some of these areas have been treated by Danish linguists. The order will be chronological and the focus will be on the exploitation of linguistic theories for solving practical problems.

### The Rask-Petersen Programme

Rasmus Rask (1787-1832) and Niels Matthias Petersen (1791-1862) were connected by strong bonds of friendship. Of these two friends,

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Rasmus Rask is well known outside Denmark as one of the founding fathers of comparative Indo-European linguistics, whereas N. M. Petersen is virtually unknown to non-Danes. It is, however, necessary to take both of them into consideration if only because Rask died so young that it was left to Petersen to carry through the programme. As we shall see, Petersen modified Rask's ideas somewhat and broadened their scope so that orthographical reform and a new curriculum for the higher schools and the university were integrated. In short, Rask produced the theory that in Petersen's hands grew into a programme.

As far as I know, Rasmus Rask was the first 'Danish linguist to propose a clear distinction between theoretical and applied linguistics. This is, on the one hand, no surprise, since he was our first professional linguist of all. On the other hand, the way in which he delineated the disciplines may still surprise us simply because the words sound so up to date.

By theoretical linguistics Rask understands that part of the study of language which discovers and formulates the rules on which applied linguistics is based. It is probably, Rask says, universal but in order to explain what happens in particular languages a number of specific considerations are necessary. Older than this theoretical study of language is applied linguistics. This consists of explanation of words and explanation of grammar. The first one is best formulated as a dictionary while the second one leads to grammars. 1

Theoretical linguistics is thus seen as an abstraction of general principles from the description of particular languages. This position is very significant. Two problems arise: the first is the trivial empiricist one. How can we describe two languages so that the descriptions may be compared without first agreeing on the principles by which the descriptions themselves should be constructed? Even if applied linguistics is chronologically older than theoretical linguistics, this means only that descriptions in the form of grammars have typically been implicit as to theory. It does not mean that the theory has not been there all the time. The second problem concerns the status of theoretical linguistics. If we compare descriptions, we compare metalanguages and not languages. Languages are simply not directly comparable. This means that theory becomes ambiguous. There is a slight but interesting difference between saying something about which way the cases of nouns should be ordered in grammars and stating that universally some cases imply others or for that matter that any language must have cases. Rask was probably interested in both, but he lacked a technical terminology for the study of language as such.

For Rask, applied linguistics leads to two useful things, a dictionary and a grammar. In both cases he aims at explanation not just description. And explanations were *historical* then.

A great debate has raged concerning Rask's historicism. 2 Rask as an historical person was placed at the watershed between two epochs, the rationalism of the Enlightenment and the romanticist historicism of the early nineteenth century. Rask met rationalism as a schoolboy and he seems to have fixed some, if not all, of his opinions already then. But the trend of the time was romantic and Rask was as receptive as the contemporary poets. Accordingly, both rationalistic and romantic features are clearly discernible in his life and letters. Although his psychological make-up was rationalist, it is unquestionably true that both Rask's public and his followers interpreted him as a herald of Romanticism.

And for Romanticism explanation was equivalent to historical analysis. It is a simple thought and many of us still find it intensely obvious that in order to understand something we must discover its roots and its development. The answer to the question: how come? is simply that: it became. In this way, words are explained as stemming from the earliest attested word form and for the Nordic language area this is normally an Old Icelandic word form. In fact, Rask left parts of a manuscript for an etymological dictionary.

As everyone knows, this type of linguistics has been singularly successful. Etymological dictionaries for all the major European languages have been produced, much to the satisfaction of the philologists and the general public. The other explanatory activity, historical grammars, do not abound in the same way. Rask himself wrote a brilliant paper on the endings and forms of modern Danish explained by their Old Icelandic equivalents and N. M. Petersen wrote a Scandinavian comparative language history, but on the whole the tradition of writing historical grammars culminated in Denmark only much later. Otto Jespersen's majestic *Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* dates from 1909 (completed in 1949) and Kristoffer Nyrop wrote his *Grammaire Historique de la Langue Française* from 1899 till 1930. Those were works lasting a lifetime.

Rask was torn between Romanticism and Rationalism, and nowhere is this seen as clearly as in his approach to orthographical reform. On the one hand he knew much more about the historical reasons for a specific way of spelling than his contemporaries; on the other hand he consistently maintained that the written language should picture the

spoken language of his day. In 1826 Rask published a long and systematic treatise on Danish orthography.

For us it seems only too evident that writing expresses speech, even though we are, some of us, aware of how indirect the representation sometimes is. But for Rask's contemporaries writing was something much more dignified than speech. While Rask was himself so anti-Christian that he dropped his second name because it happened to be Kristian, his public was still brought up on the holiness of the script. Small wonder, then, that Rasmus Kristian Rask met his Waterloo by proposing that we analyse first the spoken language of today and then modify writing so that it captures the essentials of this speech. The resultant orthography looked distasteful and vulgar to a cultural élite accustomed to embellishments accumulated over centuries.

Rask died only six years after having formulated his programme for an orthographical reform but N. M. Petersen carried on. He removed two features that were foreign to Rask's own principles, namely Rask's insistence on capital letters in nouns and his practice of inserting a *j* after velars as a sign of palatalisation in words like *skje* ('happen') and *gjerne* ('readily').<sup>3</sup> The capital letters were destined to remain the most long-lived sign of reactionary resistance to reform, although Rask's arguments were precisely those which made N. M. Petersen and the radicals drop them: the Germans use this means to indicate differences between homographic word forms belonging to different word classes. N. M. Petersen and his pupils were violently anti-German.

The programme for orthographic reform answered societal needs. The nineteenth century was the period of mass alphabetisation in Denmark and for a population going from orality to more or less restricted literacy the way to learn writing must be through speech. Reading and writing were progressively secularised, just as teaching itself was secularised and professionalised so that at the close of the century an active teachers' union was fighting vehemently for the Rask-Petersen reform. This resulted in the elevation of a moderate version of the Rask orthography as the official norm in 1889. The abolishment of capital letters and the introduction of the Scandinavian *å* instead of *aa* a letter which Rask felt very strongly about followed in 1948.

In one sense, then, the Rask-Petersen programme of language planning was singularly successful, although none of its progenitors lived long enough to see it. In another respect the programme was not so triumphant. The programme was not only concerned with orthographical reform, N. M. Petersen also forged it into a programme for a reform of

the education of the young. In order to explain this side of the programme, I have to enlarge a little on the historical background.

The schools of Denmark at the beginning of the nineteenth century did not form one integrated and comprehensive system but rather formed two separate systems. The cities had their Latin grammar schools, while in the country the village schools taught religion, reading and some writing. The curriculum of the Latin grammar schools was of course based on the classical heritage and the science corresponding to this body of knowledge is classical philology. Now in this age of historicism a tension arose between the *international* classical past and the *intra*-national past.

In the beginning the newly founded science of comparative Indo-European philology lived and thrived peacefully beside classical philology. Ideologically, however, what happened with romanticism was that the nation states slowly discovered that they had a past of their own and a glorious one. Thus Rask's and the Grimms' efforts were directed at producing critical editions of the ancient monuments of early Germanic and Icelandic. And soon this national past would present itself as not just a supplement but an alternative to the classical tradition. The German development is particularly important here, though I do not claim to understand it thoroughly. It was determined by specific political needs from resistance against the Napoleonic threat to Bismarckian imperialism and it was modified by such great integrators of classical and national culture as Goethe and Schiller. While Rask was alive, the German cultural movements could still function as the natural avant-garde or ally of Danish romanticism but after the war in 1848 and the national catastrophe in 1864 another war with Prussia Germany was rather perceived as the King Kong threat of the South to Denmark as a nation state. A wave of Scandinavism swept through the country.

N. M. Petersen sensed this danger of cultural imperialism before many others. In three great treatises dating from 1840 to 1845 he proposes to defend Danish national culture by integrating it in a common nordic cultural sphere. In his attempt to forge a new historical compromise between classical and old nordic culture, N. M. Petersen places Old Norse and Greek as the cornerstones of his curriculum. Second comes Latin and as a consequence of comparative philology Gothic. Petersen proposes that these four languages be taught in the 'inventive' way. In the beginning, he says, the student should be presented with material for generalisations, imitating the way in which a child learns his or her first language. This inductive way of teaching is with Petersen

supplemented later on by a miniature comparative Indo-European grammar, containing chapters on word formation and declensions. In this way, Petersen observes, the pupil will at once get some knowledge of the languages under study and have his own language explained by the historically prior languages. Following Rask, Petersen notes that the modern languages have lost most of the formal grammatical distinctions that the old languages had, so how could we even begin to understand the way our modern languages work if we did not look at the ancestors?

Last but not least, Petersen advocated a common Nordic written language. Once again the threat from the South was the immediate instigator. Petersen firmly believed that Danish was doomed if it remained alone and though his eyes were open to the nationalist tendencies of contemporary Norway, he still felt that the written norms were comparatively close to each other, close enough, that is, to make an effort.

Interestingly, he was very conscious of what he was proposing. He did not write as a Professor at the University, because he was not yet one, he simply wrote as the concerned citizen calling upon educators, politicians, and poets and authors to support a common Nordic norm. He hoped in this way to stimulate an organic growth, the inter-nordic language should spring from the midst of the people. The thought was strong enough to result in an inter-nordic meeting in 1869. Various measures were agreed upon here in order to facilitate a gradual fusion of the written languages of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. But by then, N. M. Petersen had died.

As stated above, the Rask-Petersen programme was a partial and slow success. Ironically, the success was so slow that when the reformed orthography was finally accepted, it was already quite conservative in relation to speech. And since then, the gulf between phonetic transcriptions of speech and its written counterpart has grown ever wider. 4 Thus, Rask's *principles*, first of all the principle of basing writing on speech, were overtaken by the conservatism of an official norm.

On the other hand, we should not underestimate the Petersen part of the programme. Petersen succeeded in pointing out the foreign-ness of the classical tradition as compared to the home-spun Old Nordic culture. In the hands of the strong political farmers' movement in the latter half of the century this became a forceful weapon in their fight for political and cultural recognition. The educated classes had been educated in the classical sense and the deconstruction of this *Bildung* was the most

important result of the next period. But Petersen paved the way for Jespersen. 5

### The Otto Jespersen Programme

Denmark is a small country. Everybody knows or is related to everybody else. One of the few school grammar books of Danish that Rask ever reviewed is the one written by W. B. Bentzien. And Bentzien was Otto Jespersen's maternal grandfather.

Otto Jespersen (1860-1943)<sup>6</sup> became famous as a linguist at a time when becoming famous meant more than it does today. The linguistic world was smaller as measured by the number of practising professionals but it was also broader and, in fact, Jespersen's contribution is not that easy to pin down he was not a specialist but an all-round linguist. Probably his is the last generation to number several outstanding scholars of this type.

Transformational grammarians learnt a lot from Jespersen's *Analytic Syntax* and his *The Philosophy of Language*, whereas students of English universally admire his *Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* I-VI. Teachers and applied linguists regard *How to Teach a Foreign Language* (1904) as a classic and all phoneticians interested in the history of their field have studied Jespersen's *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, a Bach-like summary of all that was known then within the discipline he had contributed to founding.

Jespersen was not the only scholar to take an interest in phonetics. On the contrary, phonetics was on the linguistic agenda all over Europe in the 1880s. Comparative Indo-European linguistics in 1878 witnessed a battle cry from the young Turks of Leipzig proclaiming the birth of the neogrammarian doctrine. In the history of linguistics the neogrammarians represent a typical methodological break with their immediate ancestors. Methodologically, the trick of comparing is too strong: anything may be compared to anything if we do not restrict comparisons. One way of restricting comparisons is to speculate on the plausibility of the resulting changes. The aim of comparing sets of words from one attested language with sets of words from another one is after all to establish the common source so that we can postulate that this source has given rise to specific changes leading to the attested word forms. Now, the middle generation of comparatists did not have much of an idea of phonetics, consequently they did not restrict their comparisons phonetically. The neogrammarians specifically revolted against such armchair linguistics and called for the



investigation of living dialects in order to get to know what changes were at all phonetically plausible. In this way, sound changes would eventually be explained by physiological phonetics.

The neogrammarian trend was as strong in Denmark as in Germany. Danish dialectology was founded by K. J. Lyngby, who was a follower of August Schleicher's and an ardent believer in the regularity of sound change. In order to arrive at a systematic way of recording speech he had to invent a transcription praxis for Danish. This transcription praxis formed the basis for the Dania system of Jespersen, which remains the favourite phonetic alphabet for Danish dialectologists.

It might appear from the above that it was only Indo-European comparative philology that required a scientific phonetics. This is not so. The rise of phonetics cannot be understood without drawing attention to the societal need for a transformation of language teaching. N. M. Petersen had used Nordic culture to establish an alternative to the Latin and Greek culture fundamental to higher education since time immemorial. But even though belief in the classical heritage was shaken, it was left to the living languages to bring about its fall.

In 1885, at the third meeting of Nordic philologists, Jespersen was active in creating a society baptised *Quousque tandem*. The ciceronian name had been used by the German phonetician Viëtor as his *nom de guerre* when he published his 'Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren'. This sounds once again like a battle cry and verbal battle was grist to the young Jespersen's mill. He is one of the great polemical talents in Danish linguistics.

Jespersen and his fellow fighters wrote a great many papers on the need for a reform of the teaching of living languages, but to an English-speaking public his book *How to Teach a Foreign Language* has become the classic statement of his position. Published in 1901, the Danish original was adapted to the needs of an international public by removing only the more parochial examples. The translation appeared as early as 1904 and the reprint I have in my hand is the eighth from 1947. In the following I shall summarise and contextualise this classic statement.

As a phonetician Jespersen was an expert on speech. Theoretical phonetics was first and foremost an articulatory phonetics then, but theory proved eminently practicable in the teaching of living languages. Jespersen's standard example is the teaching of the voiced *z*. Before the advent of phonetics it was deemed impossible for Danish schoolboys to learn to pronounce a voiced *z* (schoolgirls were not given the opportunity). Jespersen showed that a five minute explanation and some simple exercises



sufficed. Those were the days when theory and practice went hand in hand.

The reform which Jespersen and his quousquists fought for was to be a pincer movement. The living languages were an inferior part of the curriculum which was dominated by the classics. This had to be altered. As Jespersen says, Latin and Greek can no longer be masters and as servants they are not very well qualified. But this is only one half of the reform. The other half concerns teaching methods.

The traditional way of teaching a language takes as its point of departure that the pupil should confront the values encapsulated in the literature. By allowing individual pupils to reinterpret these values in terms of their own lives the teacher educated them. Since we are mainly dealing with dead languages, it follows that reading rather than speaking, and reading for the content of the literature and not feeling the sound of it by pronouncing it was the natural way. Understanding was checked by letting the pupils translate both ways. In fact, the main activity in the lower grades and the intermediate stages as well was translation.

If we discard the classical languages as no longer epitomising true culture in order to make room for modern languages, we are however no longer dealing with languages the pronunciation of which does not matter. Rather we are dealing with languages that may be heard spoken by real living natives. Thus, when Jespersen stated that the aim of teaching a foreign language is to make it possible for pupils to speak the language so that they are understood by the natives and to read the literature so that they get nearly the same response as native speakers would, he is calling for a revolution. Nowhere is his radical stance expounded more effectively than in his repeated attacks on translation. Translation, he says, is the least important of all the activities of a modern classroom: the pupils should learn the foreign language like they learnt their mother tongue by speaking it. Translation is not only far less important than exercises in conversation, it is obviously harmful in that it forces pupils to proceed via their mother tongue.

Radicals will always have their conservative opponents and Jespersen and his friends were no exception, Jespersen, however, had a secret weapon he was a tremendous worker. Not only did he answer his opponents in theoretically sound and often grossly polemical papers, he beat them practically as well. In 1885 before the meeting which led to *Quousque tandem* he had published the first grammar of modern English written in Danish and based on the spoken language. Soon afterwards this grammar was translated into Swedish it must be

remembered that the revolt against the tyranny of the classical languages had its strongholds in the Nordic countries and in northern Germany. Even though Jespersen was then qualifying for a post at the university, he still found time to complete a Danish phonetics and a French reader. Having completed his doctoral dissertation in 1891, he issued the first book of his famous English Reader system. This system of books consisted of two readers for beginners (1895 and 1896), and two readers for the intermediate stages, the last one of which was an adaptation of *Treasure Island* (1892). The grammar book was a completely revised version of the one published in 1885. The system was reprinted continuously and gradually became universal.

The most salient feature of this system was of course the use of the phonetic alphabet. The reason why this is not used any more may give us a clue to why it was used then. The reason is that no modern Danish school pupil is ignorant of the pronunciation of English. All the mass media abound with English speaking persons and Danish television does not dub. As this has come to us with the advent of the radio and the television it follows that the situation when Jespersen proposed the parallel use of phonetic and normal spelling was completely different. It may very well be true that the use of this device was necessary in order to get rid of various idiosyncratic pronunciations propagated by teachers who could not themselves speak the language.

Public discussion of Jespersen's programme led to the comprehensive structural school reform that followed upon the acceptance of parliamentary reform in Denmark in 1901. 7 The thirty years which had passed since the Modern Breakthrough<sup>8</sup> had witnessed industrialisation and growing demands for participation. The nineteenth century had created the nation state; the twentieth century had to solve the resulting communication problems in the light of intensified commercial relations. Weakened by the attacks by followers of Petersen and those of Grundtvigian farmers the classics yielded, leaving the burden of initiating the young ones into the culture of Denmark as a nation to the subject of Danish. It is outside the scope of this paper to follow the consequences of this shift of burden but the definition of the living languages in the schools as a curious mixture of a Berlitz school and cultural area studies has remained with us to this very day (see Wagner's contribution to this volume).

The Jespersen programme was an unprecedented success, and Jespersen lived to see it. But as happens with all reforms, it was modified by teachers and subjected to the constraints of the institutions. Thus

when Jespersen calls for natural conversations instead of the learning of isolated words or even worse, rote learning in short for an inductive 'inventive' pedagogy based on natural everyday speech, he was overtaken by the stern reality of the schools. In the 1920s the author Hans Scherfig was taught by a well-known partisan of the programme, Vilhelm Stigaard. In Scherfig's (1986) bestseller *Stolen Spring* Stigaard is portrayed as lektor Oremark:

The questions come one after another at breakneck speed. They're not supposed to think things over. That's a sign of uncertainty and hesitation. Oremark sits down on the desk in front of Jørgensen, and while he asks his questions he hits the top of the desk with his keys so Jørgensen will be distracted by the noise.

'I would not have taken that umbrella along? . . . Since it was raining, I had to take my umbrella along? . . . If it hadn't rained, I wouldn't have taken my umbrella along? . . . It wouldn't have rained if I had taken my umbrella along? Is it coming? Is it coming? Is it coming? Is it coming?' shouts Oremark, and each time he hits the top of the desk wildly with his rattling keys.

If, in spite of these measures, Jørgensen retains his composure and answers correctly, it's one of Oremark's tricks to shout 'What's that you're saying? I can't hear you!' Then Jørgensen is gripped by doubt and makes a slight correction in what he said before.

'Yes, just as I thought!' Oremark screams. 'That was wrong. That's why you whisper and mumble. But you can't fool *me*!'

Jørgensen quickly corrects it back to what he had said first.

'Well now what? Now what's the right answer?' Oremark shrieks. 'You hand me a whole bunch of things to choose from! That's good enough for me! Just give him anything, that idiot right? That's your method. But I won't let anyone make a fool of me,' Oremark hisses very softly. 'I won't let people lead me around by the nose! If it couldn't have rained, perhaps I wouldn't have taken my umbrella along? . . . Seeing that it might rain, I took my umbrella along? . . . Since I thought that it wouldn't rain, I didn't take my umbrella along? . . . What was that? Answer! Answer! Answer! Answer! Quickly! Quickly! Quickly! Is it coming? Is it coming? Is it coming?' And each time he bangs the desk with his keys. Jørgensen's eyes follow the rattling bunch of keys, and his head bobs in time with them. (Scherfig, 1986: 139)

Seen from the fish-eye perspective of the pupil the reformer looks like a classical tyrant. Sic transit gloria mundi.

### Louis Hjelmslev and the Saussurian Break

With Louis Hjelmslev<sup>9</sup> we are dealing with a new kind of linguistics, the linguistics that resulted from the Saussurian break. I stated above that the only way N. M. Petersen could imagine that a word form or a syntactical structure in the modern language could be explained was by having recourse to its genetic origin in an ancestor language. This presupposes that the modern language is in a way opaque, there is not enough information there for it to be at all understandable why people speak the way they do. This is in accordance with the romanticist idea that uneducated people, those who do not know the history of their nation and its language, lack essential awareness and are not really themselves. Hence the immense effort to educate them.

For the romanticists the speaking individual thus became an object-of-education and the change at the turn of the century may perhaps be formulated like this: from now on language as a system is an object-of-study. This indicates a new relationship between the intellectuals and the *masse parlante*. The romanticist guarded the secret of the national history and the keys to the national culture, the professional linguist of the twentieth century no longer aspires to this role but perceives himself rather as an expert practising at a safe distance from any ideological battle.

In coining the distinction between *synchrony* and *diachrony*, the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)<sup>10</sup> at once shifted the focus of linguistics and relegated the historical point of view to being forever just one possible point of view. Now, the existence of an element would not be explained by going back to its origin but rather by uncovering its position in the overall structure of the system inherent in the *parole*, speech. The system, *la langue*, does not reveal itself directly to us, it has to be inferred from *parole*. While it is hard work to do this, it is indispensable since *parole* is not the secret; *langue*, the social structure determining the individual use is.

This conception of linguistics opens for the science a direct path to contemporary speech but at the same time discards it as being but a symptom of an underlying order the language system. Ideally this calls for new grammars independent of the classical tradition grammars that disclose the hidden structure of the modern national languages, a system

the description of which has been doubly perverted, first by overstating the diachronic point of view, secondly by using as its technical apparatus terms taken from the study of languages of a different type, viz. Latin and Greek. These grammars would then usher in a new epoch of mother tongue teaching.

In Denmark Otto Jespersen in this respect was a structuralist *avant la lettre* branding as 'squinting grammar' all classically based descriptions. On the other hand, he himself continued to avail himself of the classical word classes in his grammatical descriptions. Two of his pupils, however, went much further, proudly naming themselves members of the structuralist movement which was on the move from the late 1920s.

Jespersen's pupil, Viggo Brøndal (1887-1942), chose an idiosyncratic path. By reverting to aristotelian semantic fundamentals of a very abstract nature he thought that he could weed out the inconsistencies that had accumulated in the classical tradition. Thus in his *Ordklasserne* (1928) Brøndal uses as basic concepts *Relator*, *relatum*, *Descriptor* and *descriptum* in his attempt to redefine the word classes.

The radical strategy adopted by Louis Hjelmslev (1899-1965) was to dispense with the traditional scenery altogether. Basing his descriptions on the identification of dependencies, Hjelmslev imagines that categories could be established by looking at the simple facts of occurrence and non-occurrence of elements. An element that always occurs when some other element occurs while this last element may also occur alone is obviously determined by the independent element. Hjelmslev's terminology is forbidding but the important thing for our purpose is that his aim was more revolutionary than that of his contemporaries in that he tried to replace the classical categories by new and much more rigorously delimited ones.

Obviously, the structuralist revolution promised great changes in applied areas such as mother tongue teaching, language pathology and foreign language pedagogy. And, obviously, these changes did not happen. In what follows I shall try to document that what happened instead was a breakaway of the theoretical disciplines from the applied ones.

First in line is foreign language pedagogy. I must confess that as far as I can judge the structural approach did not have any impact at all until the international introduction of contrastive linguistics reached Denmark only twenty years ago. In the schools the Jespersen influence reigned supreme all through the period of structuralism.

Next comes mother tongue teaching. Here we are in the fortunate

position of having a clear test case. 'Paul Diderichsen 11 was a Nordic philologist turned structuralist under the influence first of Viggo Brøndal and after his death of Louis Hjelmslev. At the same time, he was the teacher to whom was entrusted the teaching of modern Danish grammar at the university. For this purpose he wrote his *Elementær Dansk Grammatik* which appeared in 1946.

As a pupil of two great structural linguists, we might assume that Paul Diderichsen would use structuralist ideas in his work on the grammatical description of modern Danish. But his grammar is profoundly traditional. The structuralist flavour is due to the use of a sentence pattern model, analogous to Fries's but based on the written language, which lends itself to highlighting the importance of word order in modern Danish.

In the 1930s the study of speech pathologies had a fresh start, and this time pathological speech was no longer seen as exclusively a medical problem. In the internordic journal<sup>12</sup> which marked the new beginning (the first volume appeared in 1936), many of the leading structuralists published papers on phonetic topics. A primary concern was experimental phonetics but Hjelmslev discussed in two important papers the place of this discipline within the study of language. Hjelmslev's longest paper entitled 'Neue Wege der Experimental-phonetik' is quite atypical for him in that he latches on to the German neurologist and experimental phonetician Eberhard Zwirner's theory.<sup>13</sup> Zwirner had discovered that it was impossible to go directly from experimental measurements to the structure of speech. Clearly what the pathologists were after was descriptions of the hows and whys of normal speech in order to be able to describe abnormal speech. So if experimental phonetics could not deliver, the theoreticians had to be called for. Zwirner and Hjelmslev agreed that the structural expert was to supply the linguistic description on which experimental measurements could be based. In other words the linguists had to describe speech before it could be described. This deliberate paradox was not seen as such then. True, Zwirner had severe difficulties in living up to his ideals because there were no structural descriptions of German but this was not seen as more than a local problem.

The way out of the predicament is too often to describe something other than speech, i.e. to take as one's point of departure 'what everybody knows about Danish' or simply to substitute the written norm for the spoken one. Whatever the way out, the consequences were the same. Actual everyday speech of normal citizens was in practice' discarded as

an object of study and this meant that for the next fifty years no one would know how Danes spoke the language. Linguistics in Denmark had to wait for the sociolinguists to investigate that.

Accordingly, the pathologists of language were left with a very abstract theoretical framework that was only minimally relevant to the distinctions between normal and deviant language use.

What I have tried to diagnose and exemplify here is the fundamental split which occurred in this period between the practical and applied disciplines and the theoretical investigations. While the Copenhagen school of structuralists blossomed, societal needs were met by non-linguists or by scholars without a base in theoretical linguistics.

The only witness I shall call is Denmark's first statistician of language, Aksel Noesgaard. Noesgaard is exemplary only in that the plan he conceived so as to achieve practical objectives was brought to fruition. This makes him atypical, of course, but all the more instructive.

Noesgaard (1880-1959) was a trained teacher. His concerns were mainly pedagogical but he was not at all blind to theoretical problems. As a teacher he had been struck by the fact that primers varied greatly in how many and which words they used. The next step in his reasoning is significant. To the question of which words a child should learn in school he answered: the most frequent ones!

Soon, however, Noesgaard realised that frequency is not a simple matter 14 it has to be defined carefully before you begin to count. After all, you have to stick to these first decisions during all the years when you just count and count. In delimiting his text types, Noesgaard had to speculate on which texts would be relevant for his specific purposes. He chose the following: readers for children, assorted texts for small children and readers and fiction for the same age group, scientific reading from school books, newspaper texts, texts relating to commercial correspondence, modern Danish fiction and essays written by students at teachers' colleges. This seems to be a ragbag, but both general reading and the professional vocabulary are represented in the sample. Of course, results based on the sample as a whole are only valid in so far as all those words which do not appear more than once are discarded. Noesgaard informs us that this goes for 60% of the total amount of words. Further technical details are not relevant here; suffice it to say that Noesgaard chose to work with relatively small samples (100,000 words) for each text type and that he did not have a computer. Instead he hired his family to count.



Exploiting this first frequency count, Noesgaard created a system of readers and writing exercises in which only the most frequent words were used. Subsequently he supplemented his frequency counts by carrying out the first nationwide spelling investigation. He classified the word forms in this study by error type and according as to the global percentage of correct forms for each word form separately. This furnished him with knowledge of which types of errors were the most frequent and from the point of view of single words it made it possible for him to grade these according to orthographical difficulty. This knowledge was put to use in his important spelling lists. By inspecting these lists and Noesgaard's other works, teachers could find out which words were both frequent and difficult (and if they wanted to they could see what the difficulties were), which were frequent and easy, which were infrequent but easy, and finally which were both infrequent and difficult to spell. The last group of words one could be relaxed about while teachers concentrated their efforts on the first-mentioned group of words.

Noesgaard was not without linguistic training but he was not part of the linguistic milieu of the Copenhagen school. But contrary to the linguists of the time he had an impact. When in the late 1940s the Social Democrats began to talk of orthographical reform, none of the linguists had any empirical data bearing on this issue but Noesgaard had. And in 1945 when his spelling investigation was published, everyone could see for themselves that more than a third of the total amount of spelling errors found were errors of capital letters in nouns. The single most important change in the law of 1948 was precisely the abolition of capital letters in nouns. By a stroke of genius the minister of education made the population much more clever at spelling.

## Conclusion

What happened in this, the last of the three periods discussed, was that applied linguistics was split off from theoretical linguistics. Henning Spang-Hanssen, an engineer who became professor of applied and mathematical linguistics, had his *début* as a writer in 1946. His paper was entitled 'The need for an applied linguistics' (in Danish). Before it was published Spang-Hanssen sent this paper to Louis Hjelmslev and promptly received an invitation to lecture to the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen. Spang-Hanssen said:

While our knowledge of natural phenomena through the applied natural sciences exercises direct influence on social conditions, the science of language phenomena, which are likewise of fundamental



social importance, has hitherto shown very few social effects and little contact with public life. Meanwhile, in society several problems of the linguistic functions occur which may and should be dealt with scientifically: relations of language to conception and thinking, professional terminologies, linguistic economy, shorthand, orthography, dialects as against standard language, 'purification' of languages, language teaching, the problem of international linguistic communication etc. Such topical problems show the need for applied linguistics, a science that, building on the results of structural linguistics, must accomplish a thorough analysis of the social functions of language, as far as possible in quantitative form. (Spang-Hanssen, 1946).

The crucial clause is: 'building on the results of structural linguistics'. It was not easy to accomplish then and it was not to be easier when transformational grammar dominated the scene. The net result has been that it fell to the generation of Claus Færch to break with this pattern and start from the other side in looking the facts of the applied situation the classroom straight in the eyes. In doing so Claus Færch was in close agreement with naturalistic trends in such neighbouring fields as the sociology of science and sociolinguistics. The new ways of posing empirical questions, rather than doing armchair philosophising, have to my mind led to important insights and a host of interesting new problems. It seems appropriate to end this essay by expressing the hope and the conviction that Claus's many gifted pupils will lead on towards a new integration of theoretical and applied linguistics on these terms.

#### Acknowledgements

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#### Notes

1. This passage is a free translation of Rask's prize essay as edited by Louis Hjelmslev (Hjelmslev, 1932: 31ff).
2. The debate has been summarised recently by Marie Bjerrum (1980).
3. N. M. Petersen modified Rask's orthographical ideas step by step. In 1837 he published a short treatise in which he argues that the j is superfluous but it was not until 1844-5 that he removed the capital letters. Swedish has never

had rules about this, so in an attempt at making Danish and Swedish more alike, capital letters could be dropped.

4. Cf. Brink & Lund, 1975.

5. Important contributions to the history of this period are Diderichsen (1947; reprinted 1966 with an English summary) and Diderichsen (1968, in Danish).

6. On Jespersen: Hjelmslev's obituary in *Acta Linguistica* and Haislund (1943), both of them reprinted in Sebeok (1966).

7. Cf. Skovgaard-Petersen (1976, with an English summary).

8. In Danish historiography 'The Modern Breakthrough' refers to the break with post-romanticism and the coming of naturalism.

9. On Hjelmslev: Eli Fischer-Jørgensen's obituary in *Acta Linguistica* (1965a).

10. The literature on Saussure is enormous; the most recent scholarly introduction is Harris (1987).

11. On Diderichsen: Eli Fischer-Jørgensen's obituary in *Acta Linguistica* (1965b).

12. *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Tale og Stemme*.

13. Apart from Hjelmslev's paper which has not been reprinted, the reader should refer to Fischer-Jørgensen (1985) for an overview of Zwirner's contribution.

14. An excellent introduction to the problems of frequency counts is Maegaard & Ruus (1987).

#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

Larry Selinker

Looking over time, 'language transfer' as a type of cross-linguistic influence (CLI), is the quintessential contrastive analysis (CA)/interlanguage (IL) notion. The question of the principled role of the native language (NL) in the second language acquisition (SLA) process is one that was central to CA and has become once again central to theoretical and empirical work in understanding the creation by learners of IL.

Thus, CA and IL are essentially linked in terms of the concept language transfer. Importantly, it was Lado himself (e.g. 1957: 72) who strongly urged that the language transfer claims of CA be experimentally tested. There were two early attempts 1 to experimentally test the predictive claims of CA on the phonetic and phonological level: Nemser (1961a) and Brière (1964). These studies provide an empirical anchoring and an intellectual foundation on which the relatively large number of recent studies on language transfer stand. The purpose of this paper is to present a reinterpretation of these two early attempts in light of current knowledge. We will outline what they did in their very innovative work, the results of the two studies, where they are the same and where different and what their results might mean in light of current thinking on language transfer. As far as I know, both these attempts were made independently, neither being aware of the other's work or the planning of that work and each one took several years to complete that work.<sup>2</sup>

On the journey of CA to SLA, one scholar stands at a crucial methodological point: William Nemser. He was, it appears, the first to carry the recognition that informal observation of second language learning in relation to CA principles is quite defective, into precise perception and production tests of various phonological contrasts across language contact situations. A careful study of Nemser (and Brière as

well) sheds detailed light upon an important question which was unclear in the early 1960s, namely whether conducting experimentation in this kind of language research was indeed possible. In our period where experimental studies on IL data are commonplace, it is difficult to even recall that this was an issue. In the earlier period, the tradition of normative descriptive studies was so powerful that any alternative was often looked on as radical, with publication sometimes denied.

Nemser's original study is corrected in its technical detail in his (1971a) book and is best looked at in detail in terms of that corrected version. He presents experimental results on NN production and perception of interdental fricatives (Nemser 1971a: 57-81) and stops (Nemser 1971a: 91-120). In both the fricative and stop cases, five tests are presented to the informants, 11 NSs of Hungarian recently arrived in the USA, with no prior knowledge of English; these learners were estimated at being from 'low' to 'low intermediate' to 'intermediate' proficiency in English at the time of testing (Nemser, 1971a: 56). Here we have no space to describe Nemser's tests, but his results are interestingly mixed, in light of the current understanding of variation in SLA and in light of a CA which suggested that:

. . . Hungarian speakers would *probably tend* to identify the English stops with the analogous Hungarian stops, although tenuis-media confusions were likely, and to identify the English interdentals with the Hungarian labial fricatives, apical stops or hissing sibilants. (Nemser, 1971a: 51; emphasis added to recall hedging words typical in classical CA statements. See Selinker, in press, Chapters 1-4, *passim*.)

The results with interdentals, where Hungarian has none, show a noticeable asymmetry between perception and production as defined for these testing purposes. Concerning English /q/, the 'preferred perceptual reflex' is the labial fricative /f/, whereas the 'preferred productive reflex' is the 'apical stop', the latter sound represented by a capital /T/. In trying to capture units of phonological learning, Nemser finds that 'blends' are very common in learner productive data. The symbol /T/ subsumes a rather large set of phonetic outputs: [t], [ɖt], [tq], [dɔ́], [θ], [tθ], [sq], [tʔq], and even [ts] (Nemser, 1971a: 60-1, 72, and 81-2). As we shall see below, such widespread variation is typical of Brière's data as well. This early finding, and replication, of widespread IL variation helped set the intellectual stage for the discovery and acceptance of the important role of IL variation in current SLA theory and outlook.

For the English sound /ð/, parallel results to /q/ are found: the preferred perceptual reflex is the labial fricative /v/, whereas the preferred

production reflex is the stop /D/ with an analogous wide range of blends subsumed. That is, for both English /q/ and /ð/, concerning units of phonological learning, perception results show a preference for a fricative (/f/ and /v/ respectively), whereas production results show that /f/ and /v/ are 'totally excluded' (Nemser, 1971a: 82-3). Thus, the general asymmetrical conclusion that Hungarian speakers usually perceive English interdental fricatives as labial fricatives, but almost always produce them as apical stops. In general, then, the actual perception and production speech behaviour in these tests show that the perceptual and productive mechanisms are *not* isomorphic, a fact not taken account of in most versions of classical CA.

Concerning the learning of English stops in the Nemser data, the predictive power of CA appears stronger, with English and Hungarian pairs matching more. Since both languages have stops (not the case with English interdental fricatives discussed above), the learner reinterpreting Nemser already appears to have categories upon which to base 'interlingual identifications' (Weinreich, 1953: 7; but sometimes called 'intersystemic identifications' in Nemser, 1971a: 47), thus facilitating L2 learning. Where errors are made concerning stops, categories appear reversed within the already established categories, i.e.: '... a surprisingly large proportion of these errors represent misinterpretations of tense and (redundantly) voiceless phonemes as lax or voiced (Nemser, 1971a: 130). In terms of finer detail, there is a distinction in production deviances with regard to place of sound, with apical and velar stops most subject to errors of the above type; labial stops, however, where errors were made, were more subject to aspiration errors, 'usually of the *under*-aspiration variety' (Nemser, 1971a: 127, emphasis in the original; see also page 130).

Reinterpreting Nemser in the way described in the introduction to this section, we can say that learners in creating IL sometimes make NL/TL categories equivalent and sometimes do not. Blends are to be expected and *not* only from NL and TL material. Nemser provides evidence for at least partial autonomy of IL systems, since '... the test data contain numerous examples of elements which do not have their origin in either phonemic system' (Nemser, 1971a: 134-5).

It is important to note that one can conclude from Nemser's work that some part also still to be determined empirically of the remainder of the formation of IL is the result of different (in Weinreich (1953) terms) 'interlingual identifications' between items in the developing IL with items in the TL input; often unexpected blends occur using previously learned IL material and perhaps 'autonomous material', as

well. In addition, perception and production at times act differently. Nemser summarises, stating that Hungarian NSs in English '... often use distinct and different perceptual and productive phonological patterns' (Nemser, 1971a: 141). He then asks a question that is still with us: 'The interesting question, of course, is how this curious disjunction between the (NL and TL) patterns can be tolerated' (Nemser, 1971a: 141).

The second series of studies we will look at were done by Gene Brière. Brière's experimental phonetic and phonological studies, done independently of Nemser's work, were also conducted in the early 1960s. Here also it is better to look in depth at a technically revised later (1968) work. In testing the predictions of classical CA, Brière deals, as does Nemser, with actual behaviour of L2 learners doing phonological tasks on selected experimental data, a radical departure in those days. In looking at Brière's work, we can relate quite well to the important question of relevant phonological units in SLA. It seems to me that Brière has demonstrated that for his data there are several relevant units. The relevant units do not always correspond to known linguistic units, but rather depend on the sound involved: sometimes the taxonomic phoneme appears to be the relevant unit, but the unit in other cases seems not to be describable in purely linguistic terms. As we shall see, this also argues for the partial autonomy of IL systems. Brière developed an experimental technique which, to a large extent, imitates actual methods of instruction advocated by applied structural linguists of the time: listening to TL sounds, attempted imitation, use of phonemic transcription, physiological explanations, etc.

Reinterpreting Brière's data, it seems to me that he was working with exactly the three systems incorporated in the IL hypothesis: NL, TL and IL. NL utterances for Brière were hypothesised utterances in American English [Brière, with one or two exceptions, differs here from Nemser in not trying to establish experimentally an NL base line]. TL utterances were actual utterances in the 'composite language' Brière created. IL utterances were actual utterances produced by NSs of American English attempting to produce the particular TL norm.

Regarding the sounds /ʒ/ and /h/ in Brière's TL corpus, Brière is explicit here: reinterpreting again, *the unit identified interlingually* across NL, TL and IL is the taxonomic phoneme defined distributionally within the syllable as opposed to within the word (Brière, 1968: 73). For some other sounds, the relevant phonological unit of interlingual identification is *not* the taxonomic phoneme, but may be based on phonetic parameters some of which, he says, are probably not known (Brière, 1968: 73-4).

Brière's references here are to autonomous material of the type described as blends by Nemser.

The learning problems of Brière's American undergraduate subjects were determined by a classical CA between the composite TL and the NL (Brière, 1968: Chapter 6). Six logically different sets of learning problems 3 were set up by the CA. /z/ and /h/ were looked at in terms of distribution as per Lado's (1957) original discussion. According to Brière, the real difference between these NL and TL sounds is not the word differences claimed by Lado, but syllable differences. That is, Brière wishes to test the claim that /h/ would be harder to learn than /z/ if the syllable is the correct unit of L2 phonological acquisition. In the case of TL [eːy] versus NL /ey/, both of these sounds are phonetically similar and occur in syllable initial distribution. As shown by the symbols, they differ in phonemic versus allophonic status. TL /h/ and /ɛ/ have 'partially similar' NL allophones 'now being learned as phonemes in new positions' (Brière, 1968: 41). TL /ü/ and /i/ involve 'regrouping' of existing NL phonetic features into new combinations. In the case of TL /e/, /x/, /g/, and /h/, these sounds do not occur in the NL either as phonemes or allophones. In phonetic terms, the vowel must be 'monophthenised'. Brière intends to test the 'usual argument' that the learner will substitute his 'nearest phoneme', in this case /ey/. In the case of /x/ /g/, and /h/ uvular or pharyngeal articulation must be learned. Finally, regarding TL /t/ and /t/, the NL has the sounds [t'] and [t], but has them as allophones. Classical CA would predict here that NL /t/ with its two relevant allophones would 'split' into the two TL phonemic categories, sometimes producing one, sometimes the other in the same TL phonological environment (Brière 1968: 44-5).

Brière's results are suggestive and illuminating. His results include the following (Brière, 1968: 60ff):

- (1) The learning of a completely new articulatory feature not in the NL is very difficult, in this particular case, learning the pharyngealisation in TL /h/.
- (2) Equally difficult, though, was 'regrouping' a set of features which already exist in the NL, in this case, high-back-unrounded in TL /i/, i.e. back to front and unfounded to rounded.
- (3) For some unknown reason, front rounded vowels are significantly easier to learn than back unfounded vowels.
- (4) TL aspirated /t/, as a phoneme, is quite difficult for American speakers. Success with this TL sound would require, in this analysis, the 'inhibition of the feature fortis and the substitution



of the feature lenis' (Brière, 1968: 62). Productively speaking, this sound was more difficult than TL /t/ which was an unexpected result, since [t-] is an allophone not found in initial position in the NL.

(5) NL /t/ was the most frequent substitution for TL /t'/.

(6) Though there were unequal learning problems in the production of TL /t'/ and /t/, in perception they formed a pair with the learners in retrospective sessions saying they had a difficult time telling them apart. This result begins to back up Nemser's conclusion of production versus perceptual differences in some cases.

(7) Sounds which are in the NL, Whether their NL status is phonemic or allophonic (e.g. /h/, /t/, /*ɛ̃*/, /ey/, /h/, /*ɛ̃*/) are significantly easier to learn than sounds which are not in the NL system at all, e.g. /*h̥*/ and /g/.

(8) For some reason, /g/ was significantly more difficult than /x/. Neither is in the NL and both have the same articulatory features, with the exception that /x/ is voiceless. This was a surprising result and much discussion is presented, but the case is not resolved. 4

(9) For TL /g/, the most frequent substitution was NL /g/, but, parallel to the Nemser data, other sounds were also produced: [?], [Ø], [r], and [R]. The latter result, a sound not even in the NL system, also parallels the Nemser finding of autonomous sounds in learner production, i.e. sounds not in NL or TL (Brière, 1968: 65 and 68).

(10) Given 'proper' explicit instruction, learners were able to produce in isolation members of the 'perceptual confusion pairs' /h/ and /*h̥*/, and /t/ and /t': '... long before they were able to perceive accurately which particular sound was being given as a stimulus when the item occurred in random order on a test tape' (Brière, 1968: 70). This production/perception asymmetry is particularly noteworthy because it is firm evidence that production *can* precede perception, a counter-intuitive notion.

(11) /*z̃*/, which 'indicated complete positive transfer' from NL to TL, was significantly easier to learn than/h/, a result which in Brière's eyes sets up the syllable rather than the word, as the unit of L2 phonology learning (Brière, 1968: 72-3).

From all of the above results, it should once again be clear that language transfer effects do occur, but *not* in an absolute 'all or nothing'



fashion. Brière's general conclusion parallels Weinreich's (1953) that predictions regarding the learning of SLA phonology must be based on 'exhaustive information at the phonetic level'. Such linguistic concepts as 'distinctive features' or 'allophonic membership of phoneme classes' provide far from the whole story (Brière, 1968: 74) concerning the learner's creation of IL. That is, in addition to gathering (a) information on NL phonology from a language transfer point of view, and (b) information on TL phonology from a transfer and input point of view, we can conclude from Brière as well that fine details of IL phonology must be studied in their own right.

The phenomenon of NL influence on the learning of a second language has been recognised for centuries and is a most substantial influence. These studies back up the current conclusion that language transfer is *not* an 'all or nothing' phenomenon as was thought in the earlier days of CA. Brière and Nemser came to that conclusion empirically and independently by attempting to test CA predictions. The use of NL information in the formation and structure of ILs is 'a selection process' (Gass & Selinker, 1983: Introduction), i.e. there are some NL structures and processes more likely to be transferred than others and the studies presented here both conclude that this is so, attempting to experimentally discover what these structures are in the limited domains studied. I take it that we can conclude that the original Weinreich (1953) position holds (rephrased), that interlingual identifications from NL to TL input are essential to some parts of the formation of IL.

These studies also empirically demonstrate what was revolutionary in 1965 that experimental work on language transfer can be done and that NL and TL structural congruence is not enough to identify transfer. Language transfer seems to be predictable in a probabilistic sense *if* other than purely linguistic factors are taken into account, and the references cited in this paper discuss such factors in detail. In the Brière study, the unit of transfer at times seemed to correspond with the taxonomic phoneme and in other cases the syllable, in essence another abstract unit. At times no known linguistic unit seemed to fit, and fine phonetic and sociolinguistic detail seemed necessary.

From the Nemser study we learn that, regarding phonology learning at least, perception and production have to be looked at differentially in some cases, a result foreshadowed in Lado's work. Since structural congruence of some sort is still regarded as a necessary condition for some types of transfer to occur, Nemser states *the most current position* regarding the use of CA as a technology, that it is the most reasonable

place to begin a language transfer study. Nemser's conclusions remind us also of the most recent Corder (1983b) position [see Davies, this volume] that the learner identifies items and structures as the same across systems, thus facilitating IL creation. This is so because the main effect of transfer, in this view, is that the learner looks in the TL for items and structures that are 'NL-like', thus facilitating learning.

We additionally learn from Nemser, who draws heavily from the important work of Weinreich (1953), that the result of these interlingual identifications which are *different* in some way from the NL and TL result in the large number of 'unexpected blends' in the IL with 'autonomous' approximative systems material repeatedly occurring. Nemser points out (in my rephrasing) that these blends and autonomous phenomena occur both in developing and highly fossilised ILs. Nemser also concludes that, in language transfer terms, when the learner already has a category in the NL (e.g. in his study 'stops' versus 'interdental fricatives') that there are fewer errors, thus facilitating language learning. This result relates closely to the psychotypology concerns of Kellerman (1983). Also related to current approaches is that Nemser may have been the first to recognise that frequency in the TL is at times a possible requirement for transfer (see Andersen, 1983), though Brière seems to have discovered this fact independently. In order to study the frequency variable properly, though, large numbers of exemplars of particular structures may be required. I total 5,270 responses for Nemser and 6,720 for Brière.

From Brière we learn similar lessons. First that precise experimental studies on phonological CA predictions are possible and indeed insightful. Second, there are significant perceptual/production differences, a result not overturned in the empirical literature. Third, frequency can be a crucial criterion in determining what is and is not transferred. Fourth, there are many occurrences of 'unexpected substitutions' for expected TL sounds, though Brière does not call these new forms 'blends' as Nemser does. Fifth, numerous incidents of 'autonomous material' are found in IL production, i.e. sounds not occurring in NL nor TL, another result which still holds up.

In conclusion then, both studies in early language transfer experimental thought are consistent with the view that in the SLA process there are more systems than the two postulated by classical CA: NL and TL. Both results show unequivocally that classical CA predictions can sometimes lead to correct results and sometimes to incorrect results, when IL behaviour is actually tested. Why this should at times be true and at other times not remains, in truth, a mystery, though we have

some hints in the literature. One of the biggest SLA/IL puzzles thus remaining is the one first pointed out by Weinreich shown so well in the studies discussed here. No learner in fact transfers the entire phonological or morphological system of the NL to the IL. Learners 'select' what to transfer and what not to transfer. Traces of bits and pieces of the NL system, often non-significant in that system, appear in the IL. These fit in with autonomous IL units not in NL nor TL. The question remains: in the final analysis, how can it be that this 'curious disjunction' observed between the developing IL, on the one hand, and the NL and TL, on the other, is tolerated by the learner? In my view, we have not even begun to describe the range of phenomena involved, nor to answer Weinreich's (1953) question of which structural classes are more prone to transfer and which not, and why; early studies carefully reconsidered clearly add to our knowledge.

#### Notes

1. The material in this paper is fleshed out and expanded in Selinker (in press). It is then compared with other early language transfer experimental studies in chapter 7 of Selinker (in press).
2. Interestingly, a decade later, two of the earliest experimental works in the revival of language transfer studies, Kellerman (1977) and Gass (1979b), were planned and carried out, like the earlier 1960s set studied in this paper, without knowledge of each other.
3. Since CA is still regarded as the best source for language transfer hypotheses (Gass & Selinker, 1983: 4), I find Brière's careful categorisation of predicted learning problems, prior to experimentation, to be one of the clearest and best argued in the literature and urge readers who are interested to go back to the original and work through the details.
4. I believe that Brière neglects to mention sociolinguistic information here, which at times can be dominant, in this case, the fact that many NSs of American English can pronounce the final /-x/ sound in Bach and Jewish speakers can pronounce the initial/x-/ sound in Hanukkah. We do not know if any of Brière's UCLA subjects fit into these categories, though it is conceivable.

#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

## Some Items on the Hidden Agenda of Second/Foreign Language Acquisition

Robert Phillipson

It seems fair to assume that the contributors to this book, and probably many of its readers, share certain professional and scholastic interests. We presumably have a common interest in the learning and teaching of foreign or second languages. We may even all identify ourselves as 'applied linguists' or foreign/second language pedagogues or researchers. But is such a shared professional identity a reality or a delusion? In what sense are the 'founding texts' of our discipline the studies of the 1950s and 1960s (Selinker, this volume)? Or can our professional pedigree as applied linguists be meaningfully traced back to the Rationalism of the Age of Enlightenment and the Romanticism that followed it (Gregersen, this volume)? Or should we go further back by way of Comenius to the mediaeval period and the 'fixing' of modern European languages and their learning by natives and non-natives, as in Howatt's (1984) impressive historical survey of English language teaching? Or a thousand years further into the past, because the contemporary European languages, our style of writing, our abstract lexicon, our metaphors, bear indelible traces of Greek thought and language, passed on to us via Latin, all of these characteristics being decisively influenced by the ways in which these languages were studied and learned over several centuries (Kahane & Kahane, 1988)?

There is no doubt that historiography and exegesis at both a micro level (for instance, key teaching tenets or research methodologies) and a macro level (e.g. the spread of certain languages and demise of others) could reveal more about the often hidden origins, structure and ideology of our profession. What this article sets out to explore is how far our

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professionalism as researchers and teachers derives from shared origins, irrespective of whether we live in Denmark or Denver, Delhi or Delphi. Such an investigation can shed light on whether the principles, beliefs and findings of our field have wide, let alone 'universal' validity and relevance. This is particularly important in an 'applied' field which is eminently concerned with the utility of its research findings in syllabuses, classrooms, teacher training, language planning, and related activities. Underlying these concerns is a basic question about the nature of the scientific community of which we form part. If we are members of a global scholarly community, what social structures permit the export of research findings, methodological principles, and academic traditions from one part of the world to another? And if this traffic is uni-directional, from the Western 'centres' to 'peripheries' throughout the world (to use the metaphors of development research), why is this so, and can we do anything to facilitate a more equitable dialogue? 1

There is good cause for concern about the quality and utility of much research. Lightbown (1984a: 245) writes of 'scores of descriptive studies covering bits and pieces of learners' language. . . . *post hoc* interpretive guesses which pass for explanations'. She also makes the point, as do several other contributors to Davies, Cripser & Howatt (1984) (a state-of-the-art survey of interlanguage studies, to commemorate Pit Corder's seminal role in establishing this field), that much research is limited by an exclusive dependence on the methods of linguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics or psychology. McLaughlin (1987) analyses theories of second-language learning in an analogous way, and concludes that each approach ignores many relevant variables.

Second language acquisition (SLA) has developed sophisticated methods for analysing fragments of the learning of the rules of linguistic form, and to a lesser extent the pragmatic rules for use of the language, but how far can it really tackle acquisition of the rules for creative interpretation and negotiation, in a multitude of cultural contexts, which characterise human interaction, verbal and non-verbal?

There is also much more fundamental criticism of the whole paradigm of research in question. The native speaker norm, which is the standard against which the second/foreign language learner is compared, is not a 'neutral' social phenomenon, but one which is historically created, and in our class-biased society it serves as a filter for social and educational success (Bourne, 1988). In other words, the theories that SLA research draws on conceal social reality:

SLA research has applied this theory (Chomsky's) to *performance* data and thus bolstered the notion of a unitary, homogeneous, national standard English, as a code in which meaning stands in a fixed, unproblematical relationship to form, not simply by social consent, but by mental programming. (Bourne, 1988: 88)

. . . the effect of sociolinguistics is to objectify variation in forms by listing and fixing rules of appropriacy, thus masking and neutralizing social inequalities as mere differences. (Bourne, 1988: 92).

SLA theories therefore falsify social reality and serve to maintain and perpetuate the hegemony, linguistic and social, of the dominant group.

A different frontal attack on SLA theory comes from researchers with a Third World background. What distinguishes them from mainstream Western researchers is that their cultural background is multilingual, and bilingualism is the norm for the individual and the society. In countries which were formerly under British domination, English has been modified to meet local needs. A considerable literature now exists describing the formal and functional characteristics of indigenised varieties of English (IVEs). Sridhar & Sridhar (1986) argue that there is a

lack of articulation between theories of SLA and research on the acquisition of IVEs. . . . The theories have either overextended the constructs based on monolingual, target language settings, giving a distorted picture of IVEs, or ignored them altogether. Thus, SLA theory has been counter-intuitive and limited in explanatory power with regard to a very substantial segment of the second language learner population . . . SLA researchers seem to have neglected the fact that the goal of SLA is bilingualism. (Sridhar & Sridhar 1986: 12).

Kachru (1988) states that the central concepts of SLA research (such as interference, interlanguage, error analysis) and a 'deficit' model of second language learning are incompatible with the reality of the bilingual competence of most users of English worldwide; the monolithic, monolingual, native-speaker oriented research is irrelevant when analysing the creativity of users of the indigenised non-native varieties of English of the Indian subcontinent, Africa, etc.

If this criticism applies to SLA research in relation to users of English as a second language in India, does it not apply with equal force in relation to research in the United States? Are the SL learners not bilingual here too?

Such criticisms are forceful and disturbing, whether we perceive our professional identity as being global or local. Global power relations see to it that research paradigms and methodologies generated in the Western world are exported worldwide. This structure can be referred to as scientific imperialism (Galtung, 1980: 130), which is closely interwoven with economic, political, military, cultural and related types of imperialism. Imperialism theory attempts to account for the unequal relations holding between rich and poor countries, to explain how this structure operates and why the poor remain poor. Scientific imperialism has close links with educational imperialism: in Third World nations 'the organization of education systems, from kindergarten to research institute, reflects Western models' (Altbach, 1982: 472). The linguistic imperialism of English permeates these relations (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986; particularly Phillipson, 1986). For an insightful analysis of why Western linguistics is irrelevant to the needs of the Third World, see Jernudd (1981).

A further worry is that there is also very substantial evidence that much of, the language teaching expertise that has been disseminated worldwide has been woefully inappropriate. A Ford Foundation review of aid projects in the field of language and education concluded as follows:

If a single theme emerges from this survey, it is that the Western models that served as a basis for developmental assistance in pre-university education were in fact not adequate. At their best, at the university level, they were minimally transferable. At other levels, attempts to apply such models to developing societies often created more problems than were solved. What was missing was detailed knowledge among American and British aid agencies of how the educational systems worked in the countries they were attempting to assist and the language setting .that surrounded these systems. (Fox, 1975: 86)

This is important to bear in mind, in view of the boom that English teaching has experienced over the past 30 years and the mushrooming of ESL and applied linguistics departments in Britain and the USA.

A scholar from the Third World pronounces an extremely damning verdict on the international TESL (Teaching of English as a Second Language) community:

The role of English in the sociolinguistic context of each English-using Third World country is not properly understood, or is conveniently ignored. The consequences of this attitude are that the



Third World countries are slowly realizing that, given the present attitudes of TESL specialists, it is difficult to expect from such specialists any theoretical insights and professional leadership in this field which would be contextually, attitudinally and pragmatically useful to the Third World countries. (Kachru, 1986: 101)

As a reaction to the communicative language teaching bandwaggon, Richards (1984) pleads for greater accountability and evaluation in the area of innovation in language teaching methods, and more rigorous scientific analysis of the issues: this is needed in view of the 'often irrelevant claims of methods promoters' (Richards, 1984: 14), which he feels the British Council and their American counterparts have been guilty of.

I would claim that these criticisms are relevant for SLA researchers, because of the way the academic community is organised internationally and the fact that our research is legitimated by reference to its relevance for second/foreign language learning and teaching. Because of the limitations of space here, all that can be attempted in this article is a clarification of one source of confusion, namely the terms EFL and ESL (English as a Foreign/Second Language). Then I will probe into the historical origins of EFL/ESL and applied linguistics, which will shed light on the agenda staked out during the time of the major expansion of our profession.

Second or Foreign An Academic Point, or a Matter of Educational Life or Death For Particular Learners?

The title of this book refers to *foreign* and *second* language pedagogy research. Several of the articles in the book deal with *second* language learning, others with *foreign* language learning or teaching. We must assume that the labels have been selected with care, but this does not guarantee that their use is unproblematical. It would therefore be prudent to search for an initial terminological clarification. The *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* defines a *foreign language* as:

(1) A language which is not a native language in a country. A foreign language is usually studied either for communication with foreigners who speak the language, or for reading printed materials in the language.

In North American applied linguistics usage, 'foreign language' and 'second language' are often used to mean the same in this sense.



(2) In British usage, a distinction is often made between foreign language and second language.

(a) a foreign language is a language which is taught as a school subject but which is not used as a medium of communication within a country (e.g. in government, business, or industry). English is described as a foreign language in France, Japan, China, etc.

(b) a second language is a language which is not a native language in a country but which is widely used as a medium of communication (e.g. in education and in government) and which is usually used alongside another language or languages. English is described as a second language in countries such as Fiji, Singapore, and Nigeria.

In both Britain and North America, the term 'second language' would describe a native language in a country as learnt by people living there who have another first language. English in the UK would be called the second language of immigrants and people whose first language is Welsh. (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985: 108)

It goes without saying that there are quite different teaching needs and strategies in the many various ESL and EFL situations. Yet judging by this authoritative definition, the same label, ESL, is supposed to do service for a multitude of different contexts, in addition to which in North America 'foreign' and 'second' are used interchangeably. In practice this is often the case in Britain too. It is highly questionable, however, whether the richness of empirical contexts, which are constantly evolving, is well served by such all-embracing, overlapping concepts as EFL and ESL. In fact the dividing-line between ESL and EFL fluctuates, and strict use of one term or the other may confuse social and educational issues. Attempting to relate the definitions to some specific contexts should make this clear.

For instance, Bangladesh would be categorised as an ESL country, but the amount of English that most schoolgoing Bangladeshi children are exposed to may be so small, and probably experienced exclusively in a classroom, that teaching should be organised for an EFL situation. By contrast, Scandinavia is progressing from an EFL to an ESL zone, and this has implications for school teaching and for the whole of society: success or failure in English at school may be decisive for educational and career prospects, meaning that English has a social stratificational function; textbooks written in English are used in virtually all university degree programmes, meaning that proficiency in English is a precondition for higher educational qualifications; much inter-Scandinavian academic

discourse, at conferences and in journals, takes place in English, meaning that good English is a necessary professional skill domestically. Major Scandinavian corporations increasingly use English as the in-company language. Many British and American programmes are shown on television, with the original soundtrack. Consumers need to be able to read product descriptions and instructions in English. The number of domains where English is becoming indispensable in Scandinavia is increasing constantly. In a real sense English is not a foreign but a Scandinavian language.

It may therefore be appropriate to describe English in Scandinavia as a second language. This would apply to learners for whom the dominant local language is their mother tongue, i.e. the majority group, as opposed to immigrant and indigenous minorities, for whom English would mostly be a third language. Those working with the learning of English in Denmark can rest assured that the learning of Danish has pride of place in Danish schools. Those working with ESL in North America or Kenya are in a totally different position. Here the mother tongue has low social status, and learners generally have little exposure to it or use of it in cognitively demanding academic situations. There are also major differences between the North American and the Kenyan contexts, because the amount of exposure learners have to English differs. In the one case they are surrounded by native speakers of the language; in the other there are limited numbers of non-native speakers of the language, and the functional range of the language is more restricted. There are therefore absolutely basic differences between English as a 'second' language in Denmark, the USA and Kenya, inside and outside the classroom. SLA studies in each context should reflect this, or find more appropriate labels. Whether the learners are given the chance to develop their L1 and L2 appropriately is a question of educational life and death, education in each context being a filter which seriously affects their life chances.

In some contexts there may be a need in academic and political discourse to re-label a second language as a foreign one. The director of the Organization for African Unity's Bureau of Inter-African Languages chooses to label English and French as *foreign* languages (Mateene, 1985) when seeking to underline their historical imposition and alien nature. This is a conscious strategy for attempting to curb the dominance of the former colonial languages and create more positive conditions for the growth and spread of African languages. This involves rejecting the ESL label. There may on the other hand be strong reasons in such Third World contexts for stressing that the former colonial languages have undergone a process of indigenisation and that they should be regarded

as local languages without reference to a Euro-American norm (Kachru, 1986). This is also a strategy for liberating local educational language planning from foreign domination, as part of a programme which recognises the reality of multilingualism and attempts to build on it (Pattanayak, 1988).

Cooper (1988) has suggested that language teaching is an integral part of language planning. He proposes that a third dimension should be added to the familiar dichotomy of corpus and status planning, namely 'acquisition planning'. This would usefully bring the fields of SLA and language planning closer together, and acknowledge the fact that the planning of what languages to be learned, for what purposes and to whatever levels is part of our business as applied linguists. Such issues are included in theoretical models of the language learning and teaching process (e.g. Strevens, 1976: 131, Stern, 1983: 44), though they tend to be treated as peripheral concerns.

'Acquisition planning' should take the specificities of each context as its starting-point, and make the value judgements of the language planners explicit. This would help to reveal whether monolingual or bilingual policy is being proposed, and more of the foreign policy agenda behind foreign/second language promotion. 2 (On the illegitimacy of many of the arguments often used to promote English, within an explicit language planning model, see Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1986a.) If this were done, there would be less likelihood of false analogies being drawn from one 'ESL' situation to another, and less chance of irrelevant methods or expertise being accepted. In particular the presumption of the global relevance of ESL theories and procedures would be revealed as a myth which serves the interests of the dominant English-speaking powers. If we delve into the origins of ESL, it is clear that the discipline emerged as a deliberate result of language planning and global societal planning.

#### ESL and the Making of English As a World Language

J.R. Firth, who held the first chair in linguistics at London University and was a delegate to the Imperial Education Conference in 1923, wrote in 1930:

It comes as something of a shock to realize that we English, largely responsible for the future of the only real world language, partners in a world Empire with hundreds of millions of Asiatics and Africans speaking hundreds of languages, representatives of the civilization

of all Europe in the four quarters of the globe, have up to the present made no adequate provision for the study of the practical linguistic problems affecting educational technique, the spread of English as a second language in foreign countries, the cultural problems arising in India and Africa, and our future relations with the rest of the English-speaking world. (Firth, 1964: 211)

In fact the syllabus from Accra to Zanzibar was a British one. Even when indigenous languages were used as the medium of education in the initial years, this was purely transitional until a complete transfer to English was made. The teaching tradition that the Empire drew on was therefore the English as a mother tongue one from the mother country.

In 1959, at the height of the phase of decolonisation, the first Commonwealth Education Conference met in Oxford (where else? ) to consider how education in 'newly independent' countries could be boosted. The conference noted the distinction between English as a subject and English as a medium, and recorded that the topic of English as a second language was 'still a relatively unexplored field' (Commonwealth Relations Office, 1959: 8). A conference of Commonwealth experts was called to pursue the matter, and met at Makerere, Uganda in 1961, and recorded that English as a second language was 'still a field inadequately cultivated, imperfectly understood, and . . . insufficiently financed' (Makerere report, 1961: 3).

The only academic institution in Britain with a brief history of working in this area was a department of English as a *Foreign Language* at the University of London, which was concerned with the training of teachers for the Empire. The School of Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University was established in 1957, on the initiative of the British Council, which agreed to supply the new postgraduate courses with students (see Davies's contribution to this volume). These would be the Council's own career staff and foreigners on scholarships. The overall goal of the School was stated in its prospectus:

The primary aim of the school is to provide a theoretical basis for the teaching of English as a foreign language within the wider framework of language teaching in general, which in turn is treated as a branch of Applied Linguistics. (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1959: 148)

'Applied linguistics' is virtually used as a cover for EFL, and it is not surprising that in the protracted infancy of the discipline there was confusion as to what applied linguistics was all about.

The first generations of students were exposed to a broad course content, embracing psychology and education as well as linguistics.

First of all, they have to know something about the theory of bilingualism, of languages in contact and of the problems that arise in language contact situations . . . . They have to be able to cope with the analysis and evaluation of the wider setting of language teaching operations; of geographical, political, educational and linguistic conditions in the country where the teaching is going on, and the relation of these factors to the design of syllabuses and so on. (Catford, 1961: 35)

Such concerns have in practice seldom loomed large in ESL/EFL or applied linguistics as they have evolved. For that to have happened would have involved bringing in sociologists, economists, political scientists, anthropologists, and comparative educationalists from the start. One might then have seen EFL/ESL develop along similar lines to minority education (see, e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988).

By 1960 the term ESL was becoming established. In that year, at the suggestion of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of United Kingdom Universities, the British Council called a conference on 'University Training and Research in the Teaching of English as a Second/Foreign Language' (at Nutford House, reported in Wayment, 1961). The purpose of the conference was to produce a blueprint for higher education expansion. Their main recommendations covered support for British and overseas institutions, in particular an expansion of training facilities in Britain and a worldwide career service for British ESL/EFL experts.

A world-wide career service for key British experts in English teaching must be created not only to encourage a flow of suitable recruits, but to ensure that British universities can establish and correlate training within a proper academic framework of the necessary disciplines. (Wayment, 1961: 59)

It is quite clear from the report that the necessary expertise in EFL/ESL did not exist at the time, and that the planners were intent on creating it while establishing a professional infrastructure. The pedagogic traditions that the new expansive field could draw on were the mother tongue teaching of mother country and Empire and adult English Language Teaching (of Palmer, Hornby *et al.*, see Howatt, 1984). Both of these were monolingual and monocultural in approach. Academic imperialism ensured that it was the Centre which provided the experts and the Periphery the learners. Institutions in the Centre have expanded

exponentially, while the Periphery still generally depends on the Centre for 'experts', methods, textbooks and reference works, and research paradigms.

We are all aware that there has been a massive expansion of EFL/ESL since 1960 on both sides of the Atlantic. The growth of ESL in the US was crucially linked to the interests of the 'philanthropic' foundations (Arnove, 1982). From 1952 onwards the Ford Foundation provided grants to develop resources in English teaching abroad. By the mid-1960s it had projects in 38 countries (Fox, 1979: 4). Ford and Rockefeller provided grants to American universities for the establishment of training programmes of English as a Foreign Language. Ford funds were decisive for the establishment of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington. The focus of interest gradually shifted towards a primary concern with ESL matters within the United States. American government funding for all types of educational and cultural work throughout the world became increasingly available in the 1950s. By 1964 at least 40 governmental agencies were involved, between them spending 200 million dollars per annum (Coombs, 1964). Education and culture represented the 'fourth component' in foreign policy, along with economic, political and military components.

British and American policy for ESL/EFL expansion were to some extent co-ordinated, with regular meetings of foreign cultural policy-makers (see, e.g. Center for Applied Linguistics, 1959). This was particularly necessary at a time when the academic infrastructure of journals, professional associations, and conferences was undeveloped.

It was British and American government policy to promote English overseas as a means of extending and expanding influence. British policy dates from a comprehensive *Report of the Independent Committee of Enquiry into the Overseas Information Services*, chaired by Lord Drogheda, and published in 1954 (Drogheda Report Summary, 1954). The purpose of national propaganda overseas was 'to support our foreign policy, to preserve and strengthen the Commonwealth and Empire, to increase our trade and protect our investments' (Drogheda Report Summary, 1954: 4). The British Council was seen as having an important role to play in promoting English. To make this possible, special steps would have to be taken. An 'Official Committee on the Teaching of English Overseas' reported to the Cabinet in March 1956 (Ministry of Education, 1956). The Committee consisted of representatives of the Foreign Office, Scottish Office, Commonwealth Relations Office, Colonial Office, the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Education, the University Grants Committee and



the British Council. Their main conclusion was that

opportunities unquestionably existed for increasing the use of English as the main second language in most parts of the non-English speaking world . . . . Within a generation from now English could be a world language t that is to say, a universal second language in those countries in which it is not already the native or primary tongue. The tide is still running in its favour, but with slackening force . . . it is important that its expansion should take place mainly under Commonwealth and United States auspices. (Ministry of Education, 1956: 3)

Under the shadow of the Cold War, with decolonisation imminent, and the challenge of 'nationalist' languages such as Hindi, Chinese and Arabic, the recommendations of this report were given Cabinet approval. This ensured funding for an increased supply of teachers overseas, in all subjects, and such employment was made more secure; more potentially influential teachers and academics from overseas were brought to Britain for training; and university departments could expand into ESL/EFL and applied linguistics. In fact, as we have seen, the School of Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University was set up the following year.

A parallel development was taking place over the water, as part of a plan for global American hegemony, the first formulation of which can be traced back to the closing years of the Second World War (Chomsky, 1982). A senior British Council officer reported in 1960 that the Americans were planning a 'great offensive' to make English a world language, an 'English language campaign on a global basis' on a hitherto unprecedented scale (King, 1961: 22). The British Council's Annual Report for 1960-1, prophetically anticipates a global melting-pot:

America, with its vast resources, its prestige, and its great tradition of international philanthropy, no less than because it is the largest English-speaking nation, is one of the greatest English-teaching forces in the world today. Teaching the world English may appear not unlike an extension of the task which America faced in establishing English as a common national language among its own immigrant population.

The establishment of English as a common national language has involved tragedy and language loss for both indigenous and immigrant groups, even if many have refused to lose their ethnolinguistic distinctiveness, despite intense pressures to assimilate. Likewise the international spread of English has often been at the expense of local languages, which command fewer resources (Mateene, 1985; Phillipson, 1986). Fishman is

one of the many champions of dominated languages who object to the 'triumphalism' associated with dominant languages, and which tends to be present in our concepts:

We tend to (or want to) forget that 'spread' is one of those anesthetic terms that numb us and dull us from feeling or even recognizing the multitude of pains and sins that they cover. (Fishman, 1988: 2)

The scenario of English being made a world language has been effectively carried through. In a very real sense it is the British government policy papers of the 1950s and their American equivalents which are the 'founding texts' of our profession, as without the economic prerequisites for the establishment of the relevant institutions, the profession would not have come into being at least not at the time and in the form in which it did. And with the political agenda which legitimated the activities in question, namely the promotion of British and American interests in order to keep Third World countries in the Western sphere of influence, it must be rather sobering for anyone brought up on a diet of the 'nonpolitical' or 'neutral' nature of academic research to realise that our profession, at least in its contemporary guise, was established in order to ensure that Third World countries did not leave the capitalist fold or harm those with investments there.

ESL research is structurally part of the spread of English. The political agenda of ESL is seldom made explicit, except in vague terms, nationally and internationally. The technical sophistication of our profession has increased, but the nature of the relationship between rich and poor countries is unchanged. A clear example of the operation of academic imperialism is the fuzzy concepts of second and foreign language learning. It is clearly in the interests of scholars from the dominant group to operate with such imprecise terms, as they legitimate the apparent relevance of methods and theories globally. These in turn legitimate a monolingual approach, which ignores local cultural and linguistic realities.

An awareness of the historical origins of our profession, going back centuries but focussing particularly on recent decades, can help us to clarify where we stand and why, and whose interests we represent. As in other areas of social analysis, the analysis should be theoretically based. The fields of academic, cultural and linguistic imperialism are relatively under-theorised, though many descriptive studies in this field have been referred to. The available evidence is that it is the structure of academic imperialism which results in scholars from the Third World being trained in the West in traditions and methods of dubious relevance to their needs. It is because of academic imperialism that scholars from



Delhi share methodologies with scholars from Denver and Denmark. Fortunately it is now possible for us to learn from scholars from India and many other parts of the Third World who challenge Western academic hegemony. A more reciprocal dialogue could lead to a re-writing of the agenda of studies of second/foreign language acquisition.

#### Notes

1. Much of the argument in this paper has been culled from Phillipson (1986). This is a much longer paper, which goes into some of the issues covered in this paper, and related ones, in greater detail, including a theoretical framework for analysing linguistic imperialism.
2. The arguments used to legitimate second and foreign language teaching evolve constantly in response to social, political and economic changes. In Denmark there has been a shift towards relating the learning of foreign languages specifically to instrumental goals, in particular to exports, while continuing to stress general cultural ones. Simultaneously there are moves throughout Europe to relate the vague goal of 'international understanding' to topical issues such as peace education. FIPLV (the World Federation of Modern Language Associations) in a 1988 report to UNESCO on future trends and needs in language education stresses that all learners should become familiar with two foreign languages, as this is essential for inducing receptivity to other languages and cultures. Part of the barely concealed hidden agenda of this policy statement is the wish of Europeans to resist the linguistic and cultural encroachment of English by promoting greater familiarity with a range of European languages.

#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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## British Applied Linguistics: The Contribution of S. Pit Corder

Alan Davies

Two opposing models can be used to represent the development of Applied Linguistics. One starts with theory, the other with practice. The first (*Linguistics-Applied*) has had most influence in North America and in Continental Europe; the second (*Applied-Linguistics*) is more commonly found in Britain and the Commonwealth. The American Linguistics-Applied tradition starts with linguistic theory and looks for ways to apply it most usefully on practical problems such as language teaching; the British Applied-Linguistics tradition starts with the practical problems and then seeks theoretical (and/or practical) ways to understand and resolve those problems.

It is to this British tradition that Pit Corder belonged. As we shall see, his career reflected exactly this tradition of Applied-Linguistics, starting from practice; as we shall also see, his career finally broke with that tradition, indicating both his own vision and at the same time the inadequacy of that tradition to cope with what was eventually required of it.

Corder's career started in the well-known British tradition of Applied-Linguistics with the hands-on, practical work of the British Council's English teaching operations in non-English speaking countries where he worked for a number of years on the practicalities of classroom teaching, materials preparation and syllabus design. Out of that period came his early publications on language teaching. That first part of his career was similar to many of the better known British applied linguists

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who worked for years in the field and, in some cases, wrote up their detailed experiences in textbooks and practical books for teachers. It is a tradition that continues very strongly today.

In the second phase of his career Corder worked in the Universities of Leeds and Edinburgh editing and writing the *Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics* (Oxford University Press, 1973-7) and his own *Introducing Applied Linguistics* (Penguin, 1973), both representing the acme of this British Applied-Linguistics tradition, practice distilled and systematised and, when possible, informed by theoretical insights from the language sciences. Again this is very much a continuing tradition in the work of British scholars such as David Wilkins.

Corder's uniqueness was that in the last ten years or so of his career he proceeded to a third stage in which he developed his ideas of the systematicity of learners' errors, the notion of the built-in syllabus and of the surrender value of part learning into the theoretical model of *interlanguage* which has been so influential. In so doing he broke away from the British Applied-Linguistics tradition, recognising the need it had for a sounder theoretical base. He thereby brought together in his own work the British Applied-Linguistics and the American Linguistics-Applied traditions. In a larger sense this move away from the British tradition showed that a tradition built only on practical language teaching was inadequate to develop new insights into a new paradigm. Corder found himself quite isolated in the UK in his interlanguage work, gaining the support and understanding for what he was trying to do in the North American tradition of Linguistics-Applied. Unlike his American colleagues, however, Corder never engaged in empirical research. For him the direct link between practice and theory was always adequate and did not need the support of empirical findings.

As a young man in the late 1940s, Pit Corder joined the staff of the British Council and remained in that service until 1961. During those years the British Council took a leading role in the provision of English language teaching courses and in the training of specialist advisers. From 1954 Corder was primarily involved in the administration of English language teacher training courses in the British Council posts he held around the world. Then in 1959 he was seconded to the University of Edinburgh to follow the recently established postgraduate course leading to the Diploma in Applied Linguistics, which he obtained with distinction. Pit Corder left the British Council in 1961 to become Assistant Director for English Teaching Studies at the University of Leeds in the new Department of Contemporary English. This department had recently been set up by Peter Stevens, himself a

founder member of the Edinburgh School of Applied Linguistics. Stevens had taught Corder in Edinburgh and persuaded him to leave the British Council, at first on a temporary basis and then permanently. In Leeds Corder became interested in educational television, there setting up the first educational television studio in a British university.

In 1964 Pit Corder was appointed head of the School (later Department) of Applied Linguistics in the University of Edinburgh. Promotion to the directorship of the Department four years later led to a Personal Chair in Applied Linguistics in 1970. He was prominent in the British Association of Applied Linguistics and from 1969 to 1973 he held office as President of the International Association of Applied Linguistics. After the amalgamation of his Department of Applied Linguistics with the Department of Phonetics and General Linguistics he became in 1970 the first Head of the newly formed Department of Linguistics which at the time was the largest Department of Linguistics in Europe.

The School of Applied Linguistics to which Corder came as head had been set up by the University of Edinburgh in co-operation with the British Council (and in the original planning with the Ford Foundation). It had as its object the provision and training at a senior level of teachers of English as a foreign language. The British Council under its energetic and far-seeing senior English language officer, Arthur King, recognised that the British Council needed a new cadre of officers properly trained in applied linguistics. In addition, King and his colleagues perceived that there was a pressing need in many universities, ministries and research centres in many countries where English was coming to be used for more and more purposes, for well-qualified applied linguists to work at a senior level in the direction of English language teaching. That was the original impetus for the setting up of the School of Applied Linguistics which under Corder became the Department of Applied Linguistics and which acted as the model for many such departments in the UK and elsewhere.

Among those responsible for the setting up of this School thirty years ago, we should give pride of place to two justly famous Edinburgh scholars, Angus McIntosh, the Professor of English Language and General Linguistics at that time, and David Abercrombie, then head of the Department of Phonetics and later Professor of Phonetics. McIntosh combined a quite unusual set of interests in general, descriptive and applied linguistics and it is his vision that is largely responsible for the University's establishing of Applied Linguistics in Edinburgh. Abercrombie brought not only his own profound knowledge in phonetics but also first-hand experience of teaching English as a Foreign Language in the

Middle East. They were not alone in the enterprise. Ian Catford, at the time of the founding of the School of Applied Linguistics a lecturer in phonetics in Abercrombie's department, became the first director. Peter Stevens, also in Phonetics in Edinburgh, moved into the School with Catford; and Michael Halliday, a lecturer in General Linguistics in McIntosh's department, made a major contribution to lecture courses in the School. At that time Halliday was developing his systemic grammar and it could therefore be claimed that systemic linguistics was invented in his courses of lectures in this new School of Applied Linguistics. Over the years since 1957 many scholars now well known in applied linguistics nationally and internationally taught and studied with Corder in Edinburgh. His colleagues and students (asterisked below) made major contributions to British Applied Linguistics and as we shall see followed in their work the main themes of Corder's own major interests.

During the last thirty years the most important developments in British applied linguistics have been in a rethinking of language teaching syllabuses and methodology, less from a humanistic than a linguistic point of view. The communicative paradigm, drawing on contemporary interests in the spoken language, discourse analysis, stylistics and English variety studies, has been central in British applied linguistics and is associated with scholars such as Gillian Brown\*, Henry Widdowson\* and Michael Stubbs. But the communicative syllabus is in part there because of the applied linguistic influence on the role of social context in language learning, an influence that has always been emphasised in British language studies by, for example, Malinowski, Firth, and Halliday. Refinements (by Trim and Wilkins\*) through the use of categorisations involving notions and functions and the establishing of graded levels of achievement have had a lasting effect on the writing and publishing of improved teaching materials; indeed such materials could be regarded as the major contribution of British applied linguistics to the development and professionalising of the teaching of English as a foreign language. This development has been taken forward in the field of teacher training by workers such as Brumfit and White.

In the final analysis, however, the communicative language teaching development can most properly be explained as a normal development of the British tradition of Applied-Linguistics we have spoken of. It grew out of the explosion of English foreign language teaching provision within the UK itself where increasingly during the 1970s materials were produced which were oriented towards in-Britain English language use. It was inevitable therefore that writers of such materials would become increasingly interested in authentic and situational materials which would

be of direct relevance to learners outside the classroom in an English speaking environment. Whether or not such materials, however redrawn, are equally suitable for situations where English is used only in the classroom was an interesting debate during the 1980s. The urge to move methodology in a communicative direction also gained impetus from the experience of large-scale failure in language teaching based on some form of structural syllabus. The promise of a communicative methodology has been very seductive, but it remains to be seen if it will be any more successful in the majority of language teaching situations than its predecessors. Our conclusion then must be that the impetus to the communicative approach was practical rather than theoretical; and where theory was involved (using for 'example ideas about communicative competence) this was added to the already determined practice-based policy as a justification. This strategy was very much in the British tradition of Applied-Linguistics.

Related developments have taken place in language testing, notably influenced by Keith Morrow and Charles Alderson\*, and in discourse analysis, which in spite of its innate diffuseness was given a toughness and a coherence by two scholars working together at Edinburgh, Gillian Brown\* and George Yule\*. Mike Stubbs who was also in Edinburgh, though in another department, has also been very influential in discourse analysis. Henry Widdowson's\* contributions are many sided but he has made a particular impact in the area of applied stylistics. An important development elsewhere in the UK has been the linking of speech pathology research to applied linguistics and here David Crystal has been very active, working in the University of Reading. Other important areas which have been developed in this period have been second language acquisition research (to which we refer below), translating and interpreting, computer aided language teaching and testing. An-area that deserves special mention is that of International English, associated particularly with the name of Braj Kachru, himself a research graduate from Edinburgh although resident in the USA for many years.

A number of these areas are closely associated with work in Britain or identified with Britain, more than with North America. It is odd then that the area of interest which gave Pit Corder his largest public, that of second language acquisition, highlighted by him as the study of *interlanguage*, should have been one that belonged more strongly to a tradition of ongoing research in North America. What Corder did here was to examine the basic assumption of second language acquisition theory and provide a new rationale which has been generally accepted. That is a major achievement anywhere; for that to happen in the field of second

language acquisition research in the UK was extraordinary given that with few exceptions, such as Rod Ellis and Vivian Cook for much of the time that he worked on interlanguage, Corder was just about the only academic in the UK with any interest in the phenomenon; and we have had to wait until his students have reached a research maturity for there to be much of a take-up of his theories in the UK. The same is clearly not the case in North America where there has been a feeling of gratitude to Corder for the explanatory framework he provided for second language acquisition.

We have space to mention only briefly some of the other scholars who worked with Corder in Edinburgh as colleagues and/or students: Elizabeth Ingram\* and Alan Davies\* who worked on language testing; Julian Dakin\* who died tragically young but produced a small masterpiece in *The Language Laboratory and Language Learning* (1973); Tony Howatt\* who enjoys an international reputation for his work on the history of English language teaching. Elaine Tarone\* and Larry Selinker\* have been prominent in developing second language acquisition research in North America. Dick Allwright\* is a leading humanistic researcher in British applied linguistics and well known in North America. George Yule\* and Gordon Wells\*, now both working in North America, have combined empirical and speculative work in applied linguistics in the best British tradition. More recently Ros Mitchell\* has extended the study of second language acquisition into an understanding of classroom processes.

During this period, other centres of applied linguistics grew up in the UK and elsewhere. But Edinburgh was the first of its kind in the UK and, although beaten by perhaps a year by the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington DC for the use of the term, it was arguably the first teaching centre of Applied Linguistics anywhere. At the time of writing there are perhaps fifty Masters courses in UK universities and other colleges leading to a degree in Applied Linguistics (sometimes called by other names like 'Linguistics and English Language Teaching', or just 'English Language Teaching'). The nature of the courses taught has now changed, but for much of the thirty years the curriculum was very much that laid down in Edinburgh and offered to the world in the three-volume *Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics* (Allen\* & Corder, 1973; 1974; 1975). A fourth volume appeared later (Allen\* & Davies\*, 1977). One other important development in Britain was the founding in 1980 of the journal *Applied Linguistics*, jointly sponsored by the British and American Associations of Applied Linguistics and published by Oxford University Press. Two of the founder editors, Henry Widdowson\* and Patrick Allen\*, were former colleagues of Pit Corder's and the two



current editors, Alan Davies\* and Elaine Tarone\*, have Edinburgh connections.

Pit Corder died at the beginning of 1990 and it now becomes possible to attempt a rounded judgement on his contribution to applied linguistics. To begin, we will note his major publications and then indicate what we regard as his two major achievements. First, his publications: these reflect the range of his interests and their development over time. They also reflect the influence he had on his co-workers over the years, as our catalogue of British interests above shows. His early interests in the pedagogic application of descriptions of English grammar and in the teaching of language by television led to the three books already mentioned, *An Intermediate English Practice Book* (Longman, 1960), *English Language Teaching and Television* (Longman, 1961) and *The Visual Element in Language Teaching* (Longman, 1966). His lead in the design of applied linguistics programmes and in the establishing of a separate discipline of Applied Linguistics in relation to language teaching produced, as we have seen, his *Introducing Applied Linguistics* (Penguin, 1973) and the first three volumes of the *Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics* (Allen & Corder, Oxford University Press, 1973-5). He had always been interested in error analysis and written about it but it was not until the early 1970s that he combined this interest in the methodology of error analysis with a growing interest in second language acquisition. Pit Corder established this combined interest as an important theoretical component, further defining the Applied Linguistics core. His book *Error Analysis and Interlanguage* (Oxford University Press, 1981) brings together his papers in this field.

Next we offer our assessment of his two major contributions to Applied Linguistics: the first is that, between 1965 and 1975, he made Applied Linguistics a coherent discipline which was neither linguistics for language teachers nor English language teaching. He achieved this with the team he assembled in Edinburgh, building on the earlier work we have already described. The view he always presented of Applied Linguistics was eclectic; the encouragement to his colleagues was generous; the inspiration he provided was that of insatiable curiosity. Pit Corder's direction made Edinburgh the leading department of Applied Linguistics, certainly in Britain and probably internationally during that ten-year period. The four volumes of the *Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics*, containing as they did the thinking of the Edinburgh department as well as much of the material used in the Edinburgh teaching, became widely used in the development of courses in Applied Linguistics. What is also noteworthy is that Corder's (1973) single author book *Introducing Applied*



*Linguistics* was probably used as much in the teaching of linguistics as in the teaching of Applied Linguistics. Corder's colleagues and students went on to establish their own departments in British universities and overseas.

His second achievement is that in his later work on interlanguage, he was largely responsible, as we have already indicated, for the creation of a model of second language acquisition. This model, based on speculation, has a stronger claim than most to be called a theory. It is in fact never easy to distinguish between speculation and theory building. Corder always regretted the lack of interest in interlanguage in Britain and had to look to colleagues in North America and Europe for collaboration. In North America and in Europe Pit Corder was always held in very high regard. There is a paradox about this in that second language acquisition research in North America has always been severely empirical, much more so than any of the applied linguistic work in Britain. If Corder's work had been more empirical there might have been greater awareness in Britain of his contribution to theory: that is possible, although in view of the lack of empirical work in the field in Britain this is unlikely. In any case, colleagues in North America and Europe were always entirely clear about his contribution. For them, Pit Corder was *the* theory maker and if there now does exist a theory of interlanguage and of second language acquisition then it is because of Corder's thinking and writing about the issues. He himself never disdained the label 'speculation', not only because it can be another name for theory but also because speculation necessarily antedates the empirical work that leads to the development of theory.

We have argued that Corder belonged for most of his career very much to the British tradition of Applied-Linguistics. This approach may, we have suggested, be contrasted with the North American tradition of Linguistics-Applied in the following ways. The North American tradition grew out of the search by linguists (e.g. Bloomfield, Fries) for applications for their theoretical and descriptive interests. These applications they found in language teaching especially during the Second World War. The foundation of the English Language Institute at Ann Arbor, Michigan, was one of the key initiatives in American applied linguistics and what it represented was a substantial interest in language teaching by linguists, either faculty members or graduate students, whose chief interest was in the main in linguistics not in language teaching. American applied linguistics (and to a certain extent European Continental applied linguistics) can therefore be characterised as Linguistics-Applied. This tradition also holds in Britain, in the work, for example, of J. R. Firth (also very much involved during the Second World War in intensive language teaching courses) and of Michael Halliday. But it is not the mainstream British and Commonwealth tradition which comes,

we have suggested, from quite a different source, that of teaching English as a foreign (often second) language in the former colonies, in Latin America, Japan and in Europe. This tradition was associated with the work of Henry Sweet, Michael West and Harold Palmer among others. The work that the British Council took on under Arthur King and developed widely around the world, was in this tradition, professionalising language teaching to such an extent that British 'Teaching English as a Foreign Language' became one of the wonders of the language teaching world. It was very much a bottom up approach to the field and it led of course to a search for input of a theoretical kind. Edinburgh was established precisely to provide that theoretical backing and support. Applied linguistics in Britain was therefore never just 'linguistics for language teachers'. It was always a more problem oriented approach; and it was Corder above all who gave it order and authenticity. It was also Corder, we have argued, who found it finally wanting in that the attempt to marry bits of theory to practical issues was ultimately incoherent.

As with all such dichotomies, of course, what is needed for progress and development is a combination of both approaches. Problems need theory for their understanding and their resolution; theory becomes arid without reality to relate to. Renewal of our connection with the data is as important as an understanding of what count as data. It is to be hoped that Applied Linguistics will, as we move into the twenty-first century, make use more and more of both traditions together in harmony. What Corder's own case indicates is that a reliance on one or other of the two traditions (Applied-Linguistics and Linguistics-Applied) is ultimately inadequate: in his case a career which was so much in the mainstream of British applied linguistics and so successful in directing it needed to break with that tradition in order to make its major contribution, in the concept of *interlanguage*. Corder's career therefore can be used as an icon of the development of British applied linguistics, of its strengths and of its weaknesses. Corder's own neglect of empirical research is in the event less important since there has been no shortage of empirical work by British applied linguists. Much more important was his insistence on the need for theory to explain the practical (and of course the empirical). That insistence has still not made itself adequately felt or understood in British applied linguistics.

## References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

## SECTION TWO

### LEARNER LANGUAGE

Learner language or 'interlanguage' is a crucial concept in second language research in that it highlights the important distinction between the standard perspective taken by investigators into the behaviour of second language learners on the one hand, and the perspective normally adopted by the language teacher and language teaching textbook writer. For the researcher, learner language is not simply language that deviates from native-speaker norms, i.e. a collection of errors. The teacher is interested primarily in the extent to which various aspects of the learner's performance approximate to a norm. This norm is seen as the official target for teacher and learner alike. Inevitably, the learner's performance is seen as defective in some respect. Second language researchers are not usually so target-oriented. Learner language is viewed as an independent social or psychological phenomenon. To the extent that the learner's personal linguistic system may be seen against the background of another related system which, in some sense, it may be moving towards, it does not suffer by comparison. In this view, then, learner language is not a defective version of something else: a chrysalis is simply a chrysalis, not a deformed or defective butterfly.

The following three papers deal with various aspects of learner language. Bialystok's paper is a more purely theoretical one and makes the point that much research has been carried out without a clear notion of what language ability or 'proficiency' actually is. She puts forward some specific ideas on how to define this notion more clearly for the purpose of theoretical and experimental investigation. It goes without saying that a clearer understanding of what proficiency is must be of help in more practical domains. It is also crucial to the way in which we analyse learner language since the language that we record, sounds or marks on paper, will not yield up their mysteries via linguistic analysis alone. We need to relate the linguistic patterns to a coherent psychological theory of performance.

In quite a different vein, the joint contribution by Albrechtsen,

Evensen, Lindeberg and Linnarud deals with interlanguage written discourse, using tools provided by text linguistics. This illustrates two important points. Firstly, the study of learner language must include a wide range of linguistic phenomena, not just syntax or morphology. Despite the fact that the study of learner language has initially concentrated on these relatively more tractable areas, anything that falls under the most general concept of language is obviously relevant.

Secondly, the area under investigation may call for very different kinds of tools. The use of one particular model of linguistics to assist the investigation of given learner phenomena does not preclude the use of a very different model for some other area not covered (or not adequately covered) by the first theoretical approach. This should not be seen as casual theoretical eclecticism: rather it should remind us of the need for great theoretical and methodological flexibility when dealing with the complexities of learner language.

The Sharwood Smith paper does two things: it provides a survey of theoretical thinking from the early days of interlanguage studies up to the present day and, secondly, it shows how a framework can be devised which allows such diverse investigations as the examination of written discourse and the theoretical issues dealt with in the Bialystok paper as well as many other types of interlanguage study to be housed under the same theoretical roof. In other words, it is an elaboration of the point made above about the need for combining flexibility and coherence in research into learner language.

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## Achieving Proficiency in a Second Language: A Processing-Description

Ellen Bialystok

Fundamental to any discussion of language acquisition and use is the concept of language proficiency. The way in which this construct is defined determines how language acquisition will be viewed, how success will be measured, and how instruction will proceed. The task confronting a second language learner is to achieve proficiency in the target language, yet the explanation of what constitutes that proficiency will determine what it is that the language learner must accomplish. Nonetheless, few studies have been explicit in stating the parameters assumed to constitute proficiency and those that have, predictably, have revealed little consensus. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the notion of language proficiency from the perspective of language processing and to consider the consequences of that definition for an explanation of second language acquisition.

Language processing, on the present view, is based on a set of two interacting subskills, or skill components. The skill components are called analysis of linguistic knowledge and control of linguistic processing. These skill components are part of the cognitive mechanisms for learning, organising information, and solving problems. These same components, then, underlie language processing in both a first and second language. The task of second language learning is to cultivate skill components that were already mastered for a first language so that they can be applied to the building of a new language. Second language acquisition, then, is an extension of first language acquisition in that the development of proficiency depends upon the same types of cognitive processes. It is discontinuous from first language acquisition in that these skill components

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must function to reassemble and reorganise a new language system that the learner is attempting to master.

### Processing Skill Components

The principal claim of the framework is that language proficiency is not a unitary cognitive phenomenon but rather emerges from the mastery of these two underlying skill components of *analysis* and *control*. These skill components reflect a division of responsibility in language processing. Although intimately connected, the claim is that each is specialised for a different aspect of the complex process of how we learn, use, and understand language. The process of learning and using language, then, is based on both these skill components, even though separate development and function can be identified for each. Thus, in addition to assigning functional independence to each skill component, the further claim is that each of analysis and control develops in response to a different set of experiences.

The functional distinction between the two skill components is illustrated through task analysis of different language use situations. Specific language use tasks can be shown to require different levels of each of these skill components for effective performance. Some situations of language use, that is, are effectively carried out by virtue of the learner's level of analysis of knowledge, while other uses depend more on the learner's level of control of processing. Thus, the demands imposed upon language learners by various language uses can be described more specifically in terms of the demands placed upon each of these skill components, and the proficiency of learners can be described more specifically by reference to their mastery of each of the skill components.

The general dynamics of this model, then, are as follows: specific language uses (conversations, tests, reading, studying, etc.) demand specific levels of skill in each of these processing components; different language learners have mastered each of these components to specific levels; learners may therefore perform under conditions in which the processing demands of the task do not exceed the processing demands of their skill development.

### *Analysis of Linguistic Knowledge*

Learning a language involves the assembly of a wide variety of knowledge. For young children learning their first language, the problem

begins simply by understanding how it is that language 'refers', that things have names, and that both objects in the world and words in the language have a structure that organises and relates them. Later, children begin to understand more explicitly something about the structure of the language itself: that it is composed of words, that there are rules of grammar for combining words, that discourse is also constrained by rules, and the like. These insights are sometimes called 'metalinguistic'. Finally, second language learners must also build up an understanding of the systems and structures appropriate to specific languages, recognising the unique features of the second language and understanding how these structures differ across languages. All of this knowledge is accumulated, represented in the mind of the learner, and accessed during language processing. Analysis of knowledge is the process by which the mental representations of this knowledge are built up, structured, and made explicit for the learner.

### Implicit Representations of Knowledge

Young children speak with remarkably well-formed grammar and are, on the whole, sensitive to pragmatic rules of selection and appropriacy. But for several years, possibly until the child is about six or seven years old, the knowledge that governs their performance is largely implicit. We would not say, that is, that the three-year-old child has a theory of grammar. The fact that such young children have grammar at all is inferable only by the behavioural evidence that their speech conforms to the rules and restrictions of such a grammar.

One aspect of the development of language proficiency, then, is making explicit, or analysing, the implicit knowledge that had been governing performance. The behavioural outcome of high levels of analysis is the ability to articulate structural principles of organisation for the domain. The functional consequence of analysis is that certain uses of language become possible only with greater levels of analysis.

The assumption made about the mental representation of language on this view is that linguistic knowledge grows out of implicit representations we have assigned to the world. Young children, for example, 'know' that balls are round. This knowledge about the shape of balls is represented with the child's concept of ball, and children then use this feature to determine whether or not something is a ball. But the two-year-old child who consistently uses the feature of roundness to classify objects into the category of balls does not have a concept of 'round'. The child would not describe (with whatever limited linguistic resources were available) the feature in any way, nor would the child agree that



two different round objects, for example a ball and an orange, shared the feature. The feature 'round', that is, is implicit in what the child knows about balls. An important part of what develops is that the child makes that feature explicit, assigns an independent meaning to it, and reorganises her concepts of shapes and objects to accommodate that feature. This is the process of analysis.

The same process characterises the development of language proficiency. Children's performance with oral language is motivated by an implicit knowledge of the structure of language and the rules of grammar. Some of this earliest linguistic knowledge, for example, children's knowledge of names for things, begins as features in their conceptual representations of the world. This knowledge remains implicit and inaccessible until it is explicated through the component process of analysis. When knowledge becomes explicit in this way, it can be symbolised (not only in language, but in any symbol system such as drawing, music, etc.) and used to stand for or refer to meanings, concepts, and events. The symbolisation of knowledge is the beginning of the child's representation of language.

Children have to build up essentially two representational systems in this way. First is the system for representing their knowledge of the world. Children need to make explicit the order and structure that characterises the world around them that trucks and fire engines are both toys, that squirrels and hamsters are both animals, that plants and animals are both living things, and so on. Within this context, they also learn about the names for things, initially as part of the features of those objects. Squirrels have furry tails and are called 'squirrels' that is simply one of the characteristics. It is an intellectual revolution when children come to understand that the word 'squirrel' is part of another system that has the capability to stand for, or refer to, an object in the world. This is the beginning of the child's process of building up a second representational system, this one dealing with knowledge of language. The same process of analysis is applied to the child's construction of the symbolic representational system for language. Early features of structure are implicit. These become explicit for the child through the process of analysis of the implicit conceptual representations. This explication of linguistic structure may well be constrained by organismic predispositions to discover linguistic structures (e.g. nativist hypotheses), inevitable features of linguistic systems (e.g. language universals) or both (e.g. learnability theory).

Adult second language learners also build up their knowledge of



language in part through the process of analysis of the conceptual representation of language. The adult, of course, has a much simpler task than the child. First, the adult does not need to reconstruct the original conceptual representations of the world out of which the symbolic representations for language evolved. Adults have already done that they already know about the world. The adult needs only to construct and organise the symbolic representational system for the language being learned. Sometimes this will involve greater analysis of general linguistic features than that adult had previously considered; sometimes it will involve analysis only of the specific features unique to the new language. In both cases, the result is an increasingly organised and increasingly explicit representation of the new language.

### Consciousness

The highest level of analysis of knowledge is associated with what some might call 'consciousness', but consciousness is not criterial to greater levels of analysis. It is difficult to treat consciousness as a determining variable for high levels of analysis, primarily because the conditions of consciousness seem so elusive.

At the point at which we can articulate a principle, it seems clear that we are conscious of it, but it is also possible that it is the articulation that brought the structure into consciousness. In this case, consciousness is not a predictor of the analysis necessary to support articulation but rather a consequence of it. Threshold levels of analysis, then, would be required for the learner to gain sufficient access to the representation of the concept in order to permit articulation of the principle. Such articulation would then likely lead to conscious awareness of the principle, at least for the moment.

Relying on the criterion of consciousness to signal higher levels of analysis would exclude the process of analysis from young children. Young children, it has been repeatedly argued in the literature, are incapable of conscious reflection on their processing (Yussen, 1985). Yet young children clearly continue to develop increasingly explicit representations for both their knowledge of the world (conceptual representations) and their knowledge of language (symbolic representations). As their knowledge of the world becomes more analysed they are able to organise the world into concepts and categories that become the basis of thought (see Gelman & Baillargeon (1983) for review.). Evidence that a process of analysis characterises children's acquisition of language is based on such indications as spontaneous repairs, errors, and creative use of familiar phrases (Karmiloff-Smith,

1986). A definition of consciousness which honours these restrictions yet sets out a special achievement for consciousness is offered by Mandler (1983: 433): 'To be conscious does not mean that we are aware of our processing, only that we have access to the products of some of that processing and can represent these products for ourselves and others'. Disclaiming that consciousness is criterial to higher levels of analysis is not to deny the experience of consciousness, nor the value of conscious awareness of knowledge as a means of assessing that portion of knowledge which is conscious. The point, rather, is that a criterion of consciousness seriously underestimates the level of analysis with which linguistic knowledge is represented. Consciousness is considered here to be an emergent property of higher levels of analysis. An excellent discussion of the limitations of 'consciousness' for defining categories of behaviour is presented by Allport (1988).

### Process of Analysis

One theoretical description of a process similar to that intended by analysis of knowledge is offered by Karmiloff-Smith (1986). She describes development of a skill as passing through three phases, each characterised by a different type of mental representation. In the first phase, called Implicit, performance is governed by a mental representation in the form of a procedure. This procedure is based on implicit knowledge of the system, but does not allow access to that knowledge. Knowledge, as we generally think of it as explicit information, is actually dispersed over a number of procedures. Separate procedures run correctly without the learner being aware that common knowledge is implemented by some of them. Thus, linguistic determiners can be correctly supplied with a variety of nouns but are not organised into a system of determiners; verbs such as 'give' and 'take' are used correctly without being connected by their reciprocity; and 'give' and 'put' without reference to their assumptions of animacy. Knowledge represented in this form does not allow the performer to take out a piece of knowledge upon which the procedure is based and consider it as independent information. There is no concept of 'determiners' and no category formed by them. The information necessary to the performance, such as correct use of determiners, is implicit in the procedure, and has no separate existence beyond this function.

Once these procedures and their corresponding implicit representations become perfected, learners attempt to 'go beyond success' by examining, analysing, and organising their knowledge of that performance. The mental representation then becomes redescribed at a higher level

specific features of the representation become more explicit and are assigned an independent representation. These representations Karmiloff-Smith calls Explicit 1, and permit the learner to manipulate parts of the procedure without relying on the whole.

The final phase, which she calls Explicit 2, is a further redescription of the representation of Explicit 1, making the structure itself now accessible. The distinguishing feature of knowledge represented in this way is that it is amenable to conscious consideration.

Other theories of language acquisition also base an important part of development on a concept analogous to analysis of knowledge. Bowerman (1982), for example, attributes a significant portion of children's language acquisition to their progressive restructuring of the system as they continually 'analyse' chunks and patterns of language. Concepts such as plurality emerge from the analysis of the system. Moreover, this analysis proceeds quite spontaneously. Children's late errors 'point to the importance of children's disposition to discover structure and regularity in their environment independently of any obvious or immediate instruconceptual gain' (Bowerman, 1982: 141).

Finally, Berman (1987) makes a similar point and substantiates it with evidence of children's mastery of compounding in Hebrew. Because of different methods of pluralising for single and compound nouns, she demonstrates how young children consider such compounds as house shoes (slippers) to be single words. Mastery of the system of compounding and the productive use of the system is not established for several years, yet the regularity that this compounding system imposes on the language is detected and influences the child's 'theory' of how the system works.

In her description of language acquisition, Berman (1986) identifies five separate steps, each based on reorganisation and reanalysis of the conceptual representations of the language characterising the previous stage. The first step is rote knowledge, in which individual items are acquired as 'unanalysed amalgams'. Second is early modification, in which some familiar items are used contrastively. Such contrastive usage implies more analysis of features than is present in the first stage. Third is interim schemata. The characteristic feature of schemata is that they are organised structures, based on principles of explicit similarity, such as those that become evident in Karmiloff-Smith's phase 2. The fourth step is rule-knowledge, evidenced by 'strict adherence to rules but with some lacunae and insufficient constraints'. Finally is end-state usage, in which adult norms and conventions, including the variations of register and style, are consolidated. These five steps she collapses into three phases:

pregrammatical (steps 1-2), grammar acquisition (steps 3-4), and appropriate usage. Again, movement from initial to proficient use of the linguistic system is causally attributed to the analysis and organisation of the existing knowledge of the system. This process is carried out on the child's symbolic representation of that system, resulting in richer structure and higher-order organisation.

### Development of Analysis

This process of analysis is distinct from, but complementary to, the more obvious aspect of development in which increasing levels of skill are accompanied by the accumulation of *more* knowledge. Thus, it is trivial and uncontroversial that older children know more language than younger children; the present claim is that the knowledge that older children have of language is also more explicit and more structured than is the same knowledge in the minds of younger children.

How does this process of analysis proceed for either children or adults? There are three factors which promote the learner's analysis of a representational system. First is self-reflection on knowledge. Introspective consideration of a domain of knowledge can sometimes lead to organisation of that knowledge through the discovery of structuring principles. Thus we can come to understand the structure of what we already know. Piaget (1971) identified 'reflective abstraction' as one of the two mechanisms of development through the stages (the second being equilibration). Reflective abstraction, for Piaget, was basically the child's tendency to examine her mental structures and to attempt to resolve conflicts that arose from apparently conflicting structures. The result of this self-reflection, under some conditions, was a reorganisation of that structure. This process of reflection upon mental structures characterises the thought of children and adults alike: it is equally appropriate to consider reflective-abstraction as causally determining the development of skill for both kinds of learners. Similarly, it is equally appropriate to apply this reflective abstraction to different systems of representation to both the conceptual representations of the world and the symbolic representations of language.

Second is the role that literacy instruction plays in explicating children's understanding of language. Considerable evidence links the emergence of children's metalinguistic insights with learning to read, although causal connections between these two have not been clearly established (for different views, see for example, Ehri, 1979; Bryant & Goswami, 1987). The most plausible explanation is an interactive one, in which a metalinguistic foundation is a precondition to reading, but in

which metalinguistic notions proliferate as a consequence of learning to read.

Although adult second language learners would normally be assumed to be literate, there are two applications of this factor to adult populations. First is the case in which learning to read in another language assists the learner in sorting out aspects of the structure of that language. For languages with highly productive morphological systems, such as German, it may well advance the learner's insight into the operation of that system to see the compounding process function in written text. Second is the case in which the language is written in a different writing system, such as Hebrew. Here, the adult language learner has to learn, just as the child learning to read English, what sounds get recorded in the written language and what symbols are used to represent them.

Finally, instruction can serve to promote the analysis of linguistic knowledge. Learners who are in the process of explicating and organising linguistic knowledge may profit from forms of instruction which present rules and structures as organising principles. The limitations of such instruction would be determined by the learner's spontaneous level of analysis, the applicability of the rule to a current problem in the learner's conceptual repertoire, and the comprehensibility of the rule as an organising principle for linguistic knowledge. The explicit rule, that is, must be close enough to the learner's emerging representational structure that it can be incorporated into that structure in a meaningful way. The gap between what the learner has spontaneously explicated and what can be provided to the learner as a meaningful principle may be similar to Vygotsky's (1962) 'zone of proximal development'.

### *Control of Linguistic Processing*

The second processing skill component is the ability to control attention to relevant and appropriate information and to integrate those forms in real time. Language presents multiple sources of information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, and part of effective language processing is being able to attend to the required information without being distracted by irrelevant or misleading cues. The highest achievement in this skill component is intentional processing, and the behavioural outcome of high levels of control is fluency. For second language learners, it is often fluency that seems most elusive.

## Function of Control

Control of processing is attributed with three functions (selection, integration, within real time constraints) and only one apparent behavioural outcome, namely, fluency. Fluency, that is, is the result of skilled control procedures for selecting and integrating information in response to problems. (Note that 'problem' does not mean difficulty, but simply a situation of language use. In this sense, participating in a conversation is a problem that needs to be solved and, for most speakers, presents no difficulty in achieving that solution.)

The essence of control is selective attention. It is the intentional control over attentional procedures for specific language problems that determines the level of skill of a language learner. What attentional procedures are in fact appropriate depend, of course, on the language problem. This attention becomes difficult when there is competing information that must be ignored or suppressed. In conversation, the appropriate focus of attention is on meanings, making sense of the conversation, and monitoring the discourse. Reading makes more stringent demands on attention, as graphemes and meanings compete for their importance to fluent reading. Even within reading, different styles of reading and different purposes for reading demand different attentional strategies. Skimming and reading to study for a test are examples of two reading activities that would invoke radically different control procedures. Being able to adjust reading style in this way is a measure of the level of the learner's control of linguistic processing. Language tests, either for experimental purposes as in various metalinguistic tasks, or evaluation purposes as in classroom examinations, routinely demand attention to specific aspects of the language, often requiring unusual attentional strategies. The description of a learner's ability to adopt these different attentional strategies is generally expressed through such concepts as fluency.

The time restrictions that constrain control of processing vary for each type of language use. Conversation imposes a natural constraint: interruptions in the dynamics of interaction disrupt the exchange. Reading imposes a cognitive constraint: hesitation in the integration of information interferes with the construction of meaning. Tests and metalinguistic tasks impose an artificial constraint: time restrictions and response measures demand processing to be completed within exact time limits. Each of these sources of restriction presents a different challenge to control, but the functional consequence is the same selection among competing descriptions in the execution of a response determines fluency. Effective

execution, characterised by appropriate selections, determines intentionality.

### Cognitive Basis of Control

Control of processing may be related to the construct of field dependence/field independence (Kogan, 1983) identified in the cognitive style literature. One measure of the construct is the Group Embedded Figures Task (Witkin, Oltman, Raskin & Karp, 1971). Subjects are presented with a complex line drawing that is comprised of many segments. The task is to find a simple figure that is embedded in it in that it is some coherent subcomponent of the larger figure. Subjects' ability to solve problems of this type is a measure of their field independence. The problem, in the present terms, requires control. Attention must be directed in the service of a stated goal without being distracted by extraneous information. Empirical evidence for the relation between subjects' degree of field independence and their control over language processing is currently being accumulated in our ongoing research. In cognitive development children tend to fail problems which require selecting between two competing descriptions. One example is the spatial perspective problem (three-mountain task) introduced by Piaget & Inhelder (1956). Children have to decide what a display looks like to a doll positioned somewhere around the display. Their failure (until about seven years old) reflects, to some extent their inability to correctly select which of the two competing descriptions is correct the one they assign from their own position and the one they assign from the doll's position. Failure, then, partially reflects lack of control of processing.

### Development of Control

Two experiences seem relevant to the advancement of control of processing over linguistic knowledge. First is schooling. The logical abilities that underlie success in school performance demand objective examination of problems and selective attention to relevant information, irrespective of ordinary or commonsense meanings. In a study of schooled/literate, unschooled/literate, and unschooled/illiterate adults in Liberia, Scribner & Cole (1981) were able to identify the unique contribution for each of schooling and literacy. They asked subjects to solve problems, dealing with linguistic, metalinguistic, and cognitive skills. Their results were extremely complex, but they were able to sort out important patterns in the findings by means of a series of regression analyses. In this way, a set of problems were identified that were solved



better by schooled subjects than unschooled ones, irrespective of literacy. These problems were ones which would be classified in the present framework as involving high levels of control. In addition to the sun/moon problem, schooled subjects were better at solving logical syllogisms of the following type: All the women in Monrovia are married. Kemu is not married. Does Kemu live in Monrovia? Unschooled subjects, even those who were literate, generally answered by claiming that since they did not know Kemu they could not say if she lived in Monrovia or not. Problems such as this involve control one must focus on the form of the argument and pay no attention to the commonsense meanings that would usually provide an answer to such questions.

It was also the case in the Scribner & Cole study that tasks based on greater levels of analysis, for example, grammaticality judgement and correction, tended to be solved better by literate subjects, irrespective of schooling. It must be noted, however, that since the tasks used by Scribner & Cole were not designed to isolate demands of analysis from demands for control, they were in no sense 'pure measures', and results are not without considerable overlap.

A second factor that promotes the development of control of processing, at least for children, is bilingualism (Bialystok, 1987). Because bilingual children have the experience of hearing multiple reference to the same concepts, they are quicker than monolingual children to recognise that the form-meaning relation that is the basis of symbolic reference, is arbitrary. Bilingual children have experience in looking only at forms of expressions, as in deciding which language to use to address specific individuals, and in interpreting utterances irrespective of the form of expression, that is, the language, in which they are conveyed.

Although the empirical literature addressed to the assessment of the metalinguistic skills of bilingual children has been indecisive, the confusion can be clarified by consideration of the type of metalinguistic task used. Ben Zeev (1977), for example, found facilitating effects of bilingualism on metalinguistic awareness using the symbol substitution task. This task asks children to substitute words into sentence frames to produce nonsense. Because they must focus attention only on these forms and not become distracted by meanings, the task demands high levels of control. On the other hand, Palmer (1972) found no advantage for bilingual children using a grammaticality judgement task. These tasks depend more on the child's analysed conceptions of language structure. Thus bilingualism confers an advantage to one of the two skill components underlying language proficiency.



## Implications for Acquisition and Instruction

In the present processing framework, language proficiency is described in terms of two separate components of processing, each having its own role in language processing and its own course of development. Separation of the two component processes permits a more detailed description both of the construct of language proficiency and its development. Language proficiency is not a single achievement marking some quantitative level of progress with language learning. Rather, it is the ability to apply specific processing skills to problems bearing identifiable cognitive demands. Proficiency in a domain, or in a task, is evident when the demands of the task are not in excess of the demands of the language learner. Thus, language learners with a particular configuration of skill component development will in fact exhibit a range of proficiency with the language that is determined by the impact of the task demands on the processing abilities of the learner.

### *Language Learning and Language Processing*

This view of language proficiency has direct application to descriptions of second language acquisition. In particular, differences between child and adult attempts to learn a second language can be traced to explicit cognitive differences in the mastery of the two skill components. Children, as was described earlier, have two tasks to face when learning a language. They must build up both their knowledge of the world, including the use of language to refer to that world, and their knowledge of the structure of the linguistic system, including the control procedures for accessing those representations. Adults learning a second language have essentially only to master the analysis and control relevant to the language system. They must restructure, reconsider, and re-evaluate the structure of the linguistic system, possibly in both languages, as analysis of linguistic knowledge is intensified to accommodate the second language. At the same time, they must perfect the control procedures for processing language to meet the heightened demands of operating in an imperfectly known and sometimes structurally different system. But the starting point for these tasks is not zero as it is for children. Adults have a considerable skill base upon which to build these new and refined procedures. Children must develop the underlying skills in conjunction with acquiring language. The difference between adults and children in their initial level of skill in the two skill components of language processing is a fundamental difference between the language acquisition of adults and children, even

when both are concerned with acquisition of a second language.

Yet, in spite of this critical and profound difference between adults and children learning a second language, the skills that must be developed for first and second language processing are the same for both groups. This constitutes an essential similarity between these forms of language acquisition. Assessments of the initial states of the underlying skill components, for either adults or children, for first or second language acquisition, have implications for descriptions of language proficiency and recommendations for preferred forms of language remediation and instruction.

### Second Language Teaching

Controversy about the correct procedure for language teaching is probably as old as the first attempt to teach someone a language. In an excellent review of the history of this problem, Stern (1983) documents the shifts in style that have characterised this field. The implication of the present framework is that there is, after all, no 'correct' method, a conclusion that would not surprise most language teachers. Rather, language instruction can be viewed as an attempt to assist the learner in promoting the underlying processes necessary to master the language. Teachers will undoubtedly attest to the uncertainty of predicting outcomes in terms of the proficiency achieved by different learners after exposure to the same instructional programme.

Different methods of instruction differ in their emphasis on the development of one or the other of the two underlying skill components. Traditional grammar translation methods aim to enhance the learner's analysis of the system. The focus is on the formal properties of the language, and these are systematically examined, contrasted, and articulated to make them explicit and organised for the learner. Learners with instructional experience of this type may be expected to evolve higher levels of analysis of linguistic knowledge of the system than would learners in other types of programmes. Consequently, language problems or tasks which demand particularly high levels of analysis would be readily mastered by such students.

In contrast to such programmes are those which emphasise oral skills, and in particular, listening comprehension. The reaction against grammar translation methods in the 1960s accompanied by the psychological climate of behaviourism gave birth to the audio-lingual method. The premium skill component for this approach is control of processing. Specific methods developed in more recent years have also invested in

the importance of control of processing. Programmes such as the Silent Way (Gattegno, 1972), Total Physical Response (Asher, 1977) and Suggestopedia (Lozanov, 1979) are extreme examples of such approaches.

Many programmes impart considerable attention to the development of control while maintaining a more balanced approach. French immersion programmes (Genesee, 1983), for example, offer children the opportunity to encounter the language in contextual/functional situations while supplementing these uses with more formal instruction. Language problems requiring high levels of control of processing should be less burdensome for students with these instructional experiences than for students from more analysis-based approaches.

The issue of second language instruction, then, becomes a matter of needs assessment. What is it that the learner wishes to achieve? Put another way, what is the concept of proficiency that defines the learner's goals? It is now an acceptable doctrine of second language teaching that the purposes of the learner should determine the nature of the instruction. Applying that concept of instructional choice to the present framework would require a detailed analysis of how each form of instruction promoted the mastery of each of the skill components.

### *Components of Processing*

The framework for language processing presented in this chapter leads to a conception of language proficiency that is both dynamic and context-dependent. What we mean by proficiency, that is, is determined by the general cognitive-linguistic level of the learner, and by the demands imposed by specific forms of language use. Learners can develop proficiency in certain aspects of language use while their ability to perform in other contexts remains limited. Thus, language learners, particularly second language learners, may 'specialise' for the oral conversational uses of the language or for the technical written aspects. These two contexts demand different combinations of the underlying skill components required to process language, and learners can deliberately elaborate their resources necessary for one of these contexts.

This conception of language acquisition places great responsibility on the learner. Choices must be made and skills must be developed in an intentional and precise way for progress to occur. First and second language learning are linked through their reliance on similar processing components. Similarly, language processing and cognition share their basis in a finite set of cognitive processes. The motivating assumption on

this perspective is that there is much to be gained by reducing the number of mysteries that are in need of explanation.

References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

6

## Analysing Developing Discourse Structure: The NORDWRITE Project

Dorte Albrechtsen Lars Sigfred Evensen, Ann Charlotte Lindeberg and Moira Linnarud

During the last ten years research in foreign language pedagogy has mainly been devoted to the study of oral interlanguage. The results from this research have changed our conception of language learning and language teaching radically. Written interlanguage (apart from translation), however, has somehow been left behind.

As a result of this, we have a number of descriptions of the pragmatic aspect of oral interlanguage at our disposal (e.g. Kasper, 1981). As to written interlanguage, we still lack descriptions of a similar kind even though writing is essential to sustained communication in a foreign language.

Text linguistics and L1 composition research have a lot to offer to written interlanguage research. This has already been demonstrated in a number of studies (Connor & Kaplan, 1987; Enkvist, 1985; Evensen, 1986a). Written interlanguage is now attracting attention from a new point of view, and the aim of the NORDWRITE project is to contribute to this new development in foreign language pedagogy.

### The NORDWRITE Project

The project started in 1986 with Claus Færch as the Danish member. 1 The general aim of the project is to describe developing coherence in English FL essays from grade 8 to university level (in a three skill/two text type/four region set up) and ultimately to suggest strategies for the

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teaching of writing in English as a foreign language.

The project's pilot phase was completed in spring 1987 (NORDWRITE Reports I, II,). The present report summarises some general approaches and conclusions from the early work within the project.

The Pilot Phase:

From Local to Global Focus

The aim of the pilot phase was to identify variables that would discriminate consistently both between texts of different quality and texts written at different age levels. The initial inventory of discourse variables was based on earlier research where these variables had proved to be fruitful (cf. NORDWRITE Report I). The variables investigated were:

connectors (conjunctions and connective sentence adverbials)

pronominal and lexical cohesion

rhetorical discourse functions (i.e. functional roles)

verb form sequence (i.e. the interplay between verb form sequence and text superstructure).

The data were partly selected from different national corpora and partly collected for the present purpose. The Danish subsample consisted of 12 expository texts taken from the PIF corpus (Færch, 1979). The Swedish subsample consisted of nine narrative texts taken from Linnarud (1986). The Norwegian subsample consisted of nine expository/argumentative texts selected from the Trondheim Corpus of Applied Linguistics (Evensen, 1982), and the Finnish subsample consisted of twelve argumentative texts collected specifically for the pilot phase (Lindeberg, 1987a).

The analyses gave partly unexpected results. Analyses of connectors and rhetorical discourse functions did not give as clear-cut results as in earlier studies (see below). On the other hand, results from analyses of verb form sequence and lexical cohesion discriminated well and fairly well respectively.

One reason why connectors did not discriminate between different skill levels was that the early analyses had not distinguished between local and global function of connectors (Evensen, 1986b). The discriminatory power of the analyses was improved by distinguishing between connectors that signal coherence between neighbouring sentences/clauses and connectors that signal coherence between the sentence/clause in

which they appear and a larger part of the text 2. For example a 'therefore' that introduces a new paragraph has a global function if it indicates the conclusion of a previous line of argument (cf. also the contrastive use of 'before' and 'now' in 'Extract from an essay rated "high"' below).

Previous studies of rhetorical discourse functions (F-roles) had shown that positively evaluated texts contained a low proportion of the F-role 'assert'. Negatively evaluated texts contained a high proportion of the F-role 'assert', signifying non-development, i.e. frequent introductions of a new potential topic (Lindeberg, 1987a). Analyses carried out on the present pilot data, however, did not yield consistent results. A registration of *sequences* of F-roles in texts of different quality, on the other hand, provided more discriminatory results. Thus it was found that e.g. sequences of three consecutive 'asserts' corresponded better to quality assessments (see also 'Functional roles and levels of coherence' below). Again, a more global approach seemed to be the key to an improvement of the discriminatory power of the analysis (Lindeberg, 1987a).

The main conclusion from our early exploratory studies is thus the following:

To reach an understanding of coherence in learner texts of different skill levels and grade levels, the analyses carried out must be sensitive to the interplay between local and global coherence.

The recognition that a more global point of departure is likely to give results with high degrees of explanatory power has been decisive for the project's plans for the main phase. In the following we will demonstrate the global orientation of our analyses.

### *Verb Form Sequence and Levels of Coherence*

We have tried to draw a principled distinction between so-called 'mixing of tenses' and shifts motivated by coherence strategies. Thus we have analysed verb form sequence in English as a variable bound by constraints at different discourse levels. Various unmarked sequences of verb forms are typical of different text types: the simple past is characteristic of narrative texts, the imperative is characteristic of instructional texts, and the simple present is characteristic of expository/ argumentative texts.

Such an unmarked sequence may, however, be broken at transitions between functionally different text sections. Thus, dialogue within



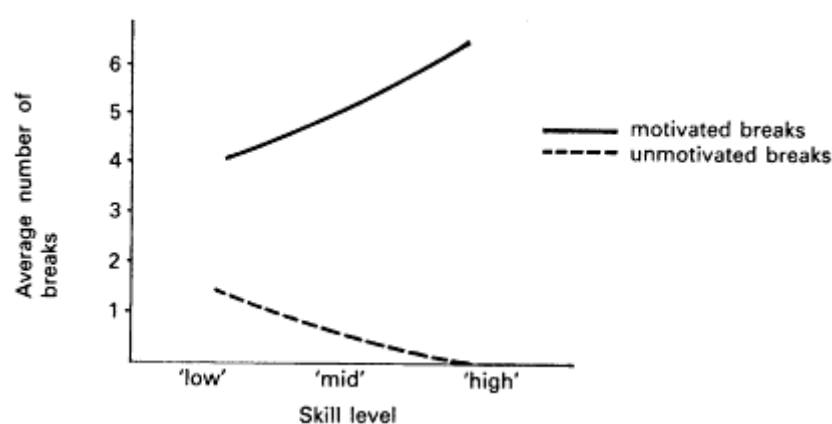


Figure 6.1

Breaks in verb form sequence in relation to skill level:  
Norwegian expository/argumentative texts, grade 11 (n = 9)

narrative will not be bound by the simple past sequence (e.g. 'Carlyle sat down; his face was as white as a sheet; "My wife is in there! My wife is in there!" he kept on saying, automatically'), and a flashback section will often be marked by an initial pluperfect (e.g. 'He lay down and tried to remember what had happened. The party had just begun and everybody was talking, with music in the background.'). Some shifts are also motivated by local constraints (like verb semantics), as in the following example: 'I hope that she will come'. Within the Norwegian project a taxonomy of such discourse constraints has been worked out for both narrative and expository/argumentative texts (Evensen, 1986b; 1987b). This system discriminates well between students writing at different age and quality levels of EFL performance.

Figure 6.1 provides an illustration of the number of motivated and unmotivated breaks in verb form sequence in relation to skill level. The following is an example of an unmotivated break: 'The family did mean more before, the family were together and people *know* each other.' (11th grade, low quality).

In trying to understand the significance of these results we have emphasised the multi-level signalling function of verb form sequence. Interpreted in this perspective the results suggest a problem area where combined requirements of local and global coherence (Agar & Hobbs, 1982) are beyond the processing powers of many student writers in traditional educational contexts.

A fuller understanding of the results may be obtained if a more dynamic psycholinguistic perspective on the interaction between local and global coherence is adopted. Such a perspective is sketched under 'Toward a dynamic model of writing and coherence strategies' below.

### *Lexical Cohesion and Levels Of Coherence*

Lack of development of ideas in student essays can be described through lexical cohesion measures such as *depth*, *breadth* and *follow-up*. These all discriminate well as to text quality (Fløttum, 1981; Zwicky, 1984; Linnarud 1987).

The lexical cohesion analysis as developed by the Swedish project operates with *sensemes* i.e. chains of meaning or cohesive chains. The different items in the same chain are called *allosenses* (Winburne, 1964; Linnarud, 1986). Chains with five or more allosenses are called *A-sensemes* (Linnarud, 1987). In the extract below the words *underlined* make up an A-senseme.

Extract From an Essay from the Swedish Pilot Corpus

*Ron* was a very sad *man*. *He* has lost *his* wife for three years ago. Now *he* lived in a small town called Bexhill.

It's a very fine day in April. The sun is shining and it's rather hot. *Ron* is walking on the street, when *he* suddenly sees a girl in front of *him* with very long hair. *He* went towards her and they began talking to each other.

*Breadth* shows the relationship between the number of sensemes and the number of words in a text:

$$B = \frac{\text{Total number of sensemes}}{\text{Total number of words}} .$$

*Depth* shows the relationship between A-sensemes and the number of words in a text:

$$D = \frac{\text{Total number of A-sensemes}}{\text{Total number of words}} .$$

*Follow-up* shows the relationship between the number of A-sensemes and the number of sensemes in the text:

$$F = \frac{\text{Total number of A-sensemes}}{\text{Total number of sensemes}} .$$

Poor compositions are characterised by a high figure for breadth and low figures for depth and follow-up. In other words there are a large number of chains of meaning introduced in a poor text but they are not developed.

A more qualitative analysis of sensemes in which the lexical chains are related to different functions in a text seems a promising approach. Some chains, such as the repetition of 'tests' or its proform in a composition on 'Tests in school, a good thing' relate to the macrostructure of the text. Others have a superstructural function, such as chains associated with the argument of the text. In the sentence 'There is a couple of bad things too', the expression *bad things* leads the reader to expect an elaboration on negative aspects of tests in what follows. If the reader's expectations are actually met it is likely that sensemes will appear in clusters which might correspond to conceptual paragraphs. These are not necessarily the same as typographical paragraphs, and in this way a senseme analysis can point to weaknesses in the writer's superstructure and in his or her ability to organise the text.

### *Functional Roles and Levels of Coherence*

Lack of development in texts rated 'low' and the nature of development in texts rated 'high' can be more specifically described by using the analysis of rhetorical discourse functions developed by the Finnish project.

Previous research has shown that there are considerable differences in the sequences and relative frequencies of discourse functions used by good and poor writers of non-narrative essays at the university level (Lindeberg, 1985; 1986; 1987b). It is thus reasonable to assume that such differences might also be found between good and poor writing at lower age levels.

In the Finnish analysis of discourse functions the text is divided into clauses or clause equivalents, called *functional units* (F-units); these units do not include down-ranked clauses (e.g. those serving as subject or object), nor restrictive relative clauses or temporal and locative clauses (cf. Lieber, 1980). A discourse function or functional role (F-role) is then assigned to each F-unit.

At the most general level functional roles can be divided into *developmental* and *non-developmental* roles; the former include F-roles such as 'result', 'qualify', 'cause', 'contrast' and 'specify' and the latter

include e.g. 'assert' (for illustration see the extract below). The not unexpected finding has been that non-developmental roles, like 'assert' or 'non-functional', are considerably more frequent in the coherence patterns of the lowest quality categories. In the Norwegian sample, the 'low' essays had three consecutive 'assert' as their most frequent pattern, while the 'mid' and the 'high' essays had predominantly developmental sequences at the top: 'assert'-'specify'-'contrast' and 'co-specify'-'co-specify'-'co-specify', respectively (Lindeberg, 1987a: 47). F-role analysis of the Danish and Finnish pilot data did not give results as consistent as the above mentioned. This was partly due to very small samples but might also be due to the fairly local nature of the analysis (see above).

So far, only patterns of three consecutive F-roles have been examined. In the larger material collected for the main phase, patterns of sequences of more than three F-roles will be considered, to get at regularities in paragraph structure or other hierarchical clusters. An example of the relation between local and global coherence patterns is given below. The text is a paragraph from the Norwegian sample:

Extract from an Essay Rated 'High'

11: A large advantage in the modern world is that we have doctors and hospitals,

b: so that we can get medical help

c: if we need that.

12: Before many children died a short time before they were born,

b: because they were ill and couldn't get any help.

13: Many people couldn't afford to pay a doctor.

14: If you got cancer e.g.,

b: there wasn't anything the doctor could do for you.

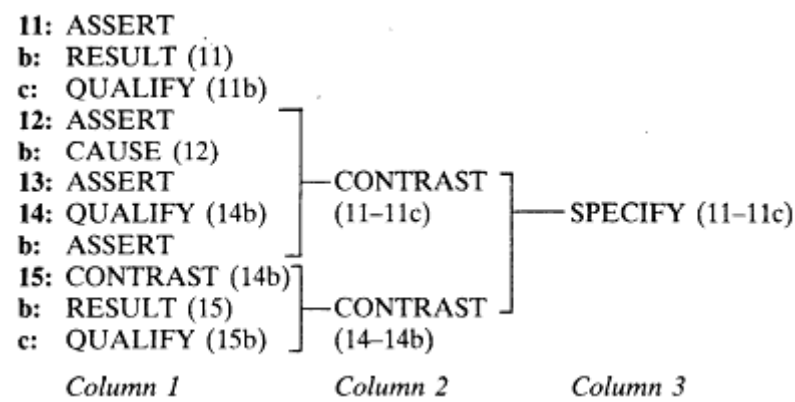
15: Now they have got more knowledge,

b: and you can live a long, normal life,

c: even if you get cancer.

The numbers 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 refer to sentences in the text as indicated by the student. Each student sentence is then divided into functional units, e.g. sentence 11 consists of 3 functional units i.e. 11+b+c. The role assigned to each unit is presented below, thus '15 CONTRAST (14b)' means that 15 expresses a contrast to 14b, and 'SPECIFY (11-11c)' means that 12-15c is a specification of 11-11c.

Sequences of Functional Roles



This illustrates the difference in results gained from a local compared to a global analysis of F-roles. The three columns represent a continuum from local to fairly global levels. Whereas one of the F-roles in Column 2 was already registered in Column 1, Column 3 contains an F-role that was not identified in the local analysis represented in the first and second columns. It is, therefore, assumed that the unexpected findings as to the lack of discriminatory power of the frequency of 'assert' in the pilot material are partly due to the fact that the analyses had been too local in scope.

Superstructure, Paragraphs and Writer Intentions

Our exploratory studies indicated a need for analyses that reveal how local and global coherence interact in essays of different quality. We, therefore, decided on a tentative procedure for multi-variate analysis, which comprises the following steps:

- (1) Analyse assignment instruction for lexical clues to superstructure.
- (2) Sketch possible superstructures on the basis of 1.
- (3) Identify *conceptual paragraphs* on the basis of interaction between:
  - (a) 1 and 2, main lexical items
  - (b) grammatical pointers (cf. macro-level adverbials in extract above)
  - (c) verb form sequence
  - (d) indenting or extra empty line
  - (e) degree of development of concepts

(f) shifts in the level of specificity

(4) Judge paragraph-internal structure on the basis of functional role sequences.

(5) Judge paragraph-internal structure and inter-paragraph relationships e.g. by accounting for setting, episodes, action sequences etc. in narrative texts (Stein & Glenn, 1979; Peterson & McCabe, 1983).

(6) Match 3, 4 and 5 against 2.

In the Danish project the Danish pilot data was analysed using steps 1, 2, 3a and 3d. The starting point for the analyses is the instruction given for an assignment. The idea is to analyse lexical clues to superstructure in the instruction and on the basis of these predict possible structures that the instruction to the assignment gives rise to and finally match actual text structure and predicted text structure. In connection with the Danish pilot data, fairly lengthy instructions (which also included pictures) asked the students to write about violence, and listed a number of types of violence to help the students get started. The students were free to approach the assignment in whichever way they wanted.

The instructions provided the following key words:

violence in the home

violence at school

violence in sports

violence in connection with politics.

Two obvious ways of approaching this assignment would be either to produce an essay that deals with all or several of the subtopics (structure I) or to produce a text that only focusses on one of the subtopics (structure II). The latter was predicted as potentially being the most successful one.

The results of the analysis are given in Table 6.1. In the low score essays the picture that emerged was fairly clear: six out of seven essays (from grades 8, 10 and 1,3) had structure I, i.e. list-like essays dealing with all or several of the subtopics. The fact that one low score essay had structure II only goes to show that a focussed essay might still be a low quality essay, as there are other factors that influence quality as well.

High score essays from the same grade levels had three out of five essays with structure II. Whereas structure I low score essays typically provided an enumeration of various subtopics stopping in mid air so to speak, structure I high score essays typically rounded off their presentation of the various types of violence by relating this to some kind of thesis,

TABLE 6.1  
Results  
Grade StructureConceptual paragraphs match with  
level typographical paragraphs (+ = match, - = no  
match)

Essays with low scores (2-3)			
Lower	8	I	-
secondary	8	I	+
level	10	I	-
	10	II	+
Upper	1	I	-
secondary	3	I	-
level	3	I	-
Essays with high scores (4-5)			
Lower	8	I	+
secondary	10	I	+
level			
Upper	1	II	+
secondary	1	II	+
level	3	II	-

e.g. 'No one can be really safe', and 'Violence in Denmark is harder than five years ago', so that the enumeration of various types of violence served as an illustration of these statements. It should also be noted that the two structure I high score essays were found in the lowest grades.

As to conceptual paragraphs, this exploratory analysis identified these for structure I on the basis of subtopics and for structure II on a more intuitive basis. This intuitive bias will in future analyses be reduced by going through more elaborate analyses. For the low score essays five out of seven did not show a match between conceptual paragraphs and typographical paragraphs (identified on the basis of indenting and extra empty lines), whereas for the high score essays four out of five showed a match between conceptual paragraphs and typographical paragraphs. The lack of match between conceptual and typographical paragraphs



seems to be a symptom of learners' problems in handling local and global coherence.

The Danish project has found that an initial allocation of texts into different groups depending on whether or not the writer states his/her intentions seems a fruitful first step in explaining evaluations of texts. If the writer supplies what he/she has promised to do and does so through a coherent text then all is well. If on the other hand the writer does not keep his/her promises it might signify that the student did have some kind of plan, but that in the process of writing he/she experienced difficulties in sticking to this plan, and either did not have the time or the ability to revise the text according to new ideas that emerged during the writing phase. Finally, if the writer does not state intentions initially the reader automatically prepares for a suspended structural pattern. If, however, the reader's expectations are not met, it is reasonable to assume that the student has had problems in planning at the global level.

Below are some suggestions as to why students experience such problems and what strategies they seem to adopt at different age levels.

#### *Toward a Dynamic Model of Writing and Coherence Strategies*

The requirements of local and global coherence on the processing load of the learner will be considered in relation to a simple dynamic model of writing, devised by the Norwegian project (Evensen, 1987b). This model takes as its starting point the fact that in transferring ideas to paper, basically hierarchical cognitive structures have to be translated into basically sequential linguistic form. It is very difficult to carry out this process in such a way that both sequential (local) and hierarchical (global) coherence are taken care of simultaneously by one linguistic sequence. If the student writer does not manage to translate his/her cognitive hierarchy into such a sequential representation, the receiver will experience problems in his/her top-down/bottom-up processing. In Figure 6.2 this problem is represented by broken connecting lines.

The Norwegian project has also considered the development of different coherence strategies to cope with these requirements (see Figure 6.3). Such strategies may be tentatively classified into three broad types based on studies of child language development (Evensen, 1987b). In studying the development of oral stories produced by young children Applebee (1978) noted the simple associative nature of many early stories. The same associative/additive coherence patterns may be found in early school writing (Bereiter, 1980; Scardamalia, 1981; Evensen, 1987a).

At a later stage of development, local association will be subsumed

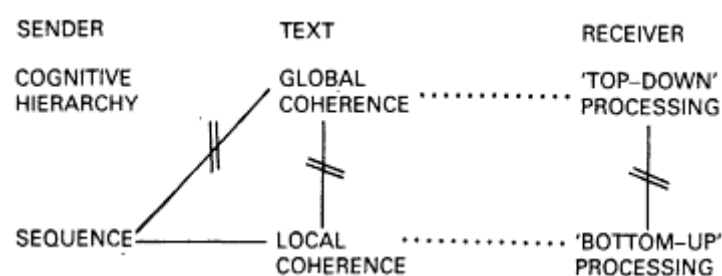


Figure 6.2

A dynamic model for written communication



Figure 6.3

Developing coherence strategies: a tentative model

under a strategy type where e.g. a temporal anchor gives the text a simple global coherence (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987; Enkvist, 1987; Evensen, 1987b).

Strategies of this type (i.e. focal strategies) will in turn be subsumed under hierarchical strategies, where e.g. stories will not only have time lines, but also plots, characters with different motives for their actions and more or less developed settings. In a less than favourable writing situation, e.g. when the assignment is too difficult or not interesting to the student writer, there may even be temporary regression from more advanced to less advanced strategies.

In interpreting EFL writing at fairly advanced levels in relation to such a model, we seem to be studying outcomes of a rather extended and often painful transition from focal to hierarchical coherence strategies.

#### *Concluding Remarks*

The experiences from the pilot phase have several implications. They show that results from analyses which are too local in scope cannot provide a consistent explanation of the differences between positively and negatively evaluated texts. Also we find that, from a pedagogical point

of view, analyses of the combined contributions of different variables to coherence are much more fruitful than the identification of a small set of variables that on their own have high discriminatory power in relation to text quality. Since the former provide fairly detailed information on aspects of text quality, results from such analyses will be valuable tools in diagnosing student problems and in advising students on how to improve their writing.

#### Notes

1. The project group comprises members from four Nordic countries: Lars Sigfred Evensen, University of Trondheim, Norway (project leader); Ann Charlotte Lindeberg, Åbo Akademi/The Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Helsinki, Finland; Moira Linnarud, University of Lund, Sweden, and Dorte Albrechtsen, University of Copenhagen, Denmark (member since early 1987). The project group is assisted in its work by an advisory council, consisting of Nils Erik Enkvist, Åbo Akademi, Finland; Gunnel Källgren, University of Stockholm, Sweden; Lita Lundquist, The Copenhagen School of Economics and Business Administration, Denmark; and Elisabeth Ingram, University of Trondheim, Norway, until her untimely death in June 1987.

2. The term 'coherence' is used in a general sense in this article as an umbrella term to refer to connectedness at various levels in the text. Thus local coherence applies to formal, semantic and pragmatic relations between neighbouring clauses or functional units, and global coherence relates to higher order units dominating such interclausal relationships (cf. Agar & Hobbs, 1982). The term sometimes refers to linguistically signalled links (as in the case of analyses of verb form sequence) and sometimes to links not signalled linguistically (as in the case of analyses of e.g. functional role clusters).

#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the back of the book.

## IL, Conceptual Confusions and New Beginnings

M. Sharwood Smith

In this paper, I would like to review various problems connected with the notion of 'interlanguage' in the light of past models and more recent developments. Research in the 1970s went ahead by investigating second language learning using fairly elementary frameworks. The effect of such studies was to provide a better heuristic base for refining Our ideas about learner language and the relevant underlying processes. More recently, Bialystok & Sharwood Smith (1985) reviewed thinking on interlanguage and concluded that IL was often used in manner that raised many questions without any answers being provided. The present discussion may be seen as a continuation of this review (see also Sharwood Smith, forthcoming). The discussion will centre on four aspects of IL theory, namely the role of 'other tongue influence' (i.e. crosslinguistic influence or 'transfer'), competence versus performance, conscious knowledge of a language and, finally, variability. I would like then to conclude by putting forward a modular approach to IL studies.

The IL hypothesis, as originally framed by Selinker (1972), entails that most L2 learners have recourse to a 'latent psychological structure' underlying their language development. This latent structure, in turn, may be characterised as comprising a number of central interlanguage processes. Selinker's ideas fall fair and square into the view which sees second language development as radically different from mother tongue development, at least with respect to the acquisition of grammar. L1 acquisition processes being, by hypothesis, unavailable, apparent similarities between patterns observed in the two types of language acquisition cannot be attributed to the workings of the selfsame language acquisition device (LAD) that created the L1 system.

In Selinker's view, explanations have to be looked for elsewhere,

i.e. in the effect of L1 transfer into IL or to general inductive learning processes, in particular the processes of inducing a principle from the data and overgeneralising it beyond the evidence sanctioned by that evidence, and indeed the process of simplification, making the new system as simple and regular as possible, at least in the early stages. The very fact of fossilisation seems to rule out any appeal to such notions as 'LAD' or 'UG' (see also Schachter, 1988). In broad terms, then, this view implies that the onus of proof is on anyone wishing to proclaim the continuing existence and accessibility of the L1 developmental 'machine' (LAD). Experience suggests that the opposite is the case and that a totally new explanation or set of explanations are in order for L2 developmental phenomena.

Bialystok & Sharwood Smith (1985), in contradistinction to the view described above, asserted that it was reasonable to make the more parsimonious claim of fundamental similarity. The undeniably different outcomes that we may observe in L2 acquisition may be attributed to the different external circumstances under which those (same) processes have to work. To give perhaps the most obvious example, the prior linguistic knowledge developed via exposure to L1 data creates a quite different setting for LAD to work within. Secondly, the learner's cognitive maturity brings with it a greater awareness of what language and language learning mean and there is good reason to suppose that this may have a palpable degree of influence on aspects of L2 acquisition not directly relevant to the creation of the underlying grammatical make-up of the language being acquired. This all means that a lot of L2 (as opposed to L1) acquisition may *look* very different despite the fact that the developmental strategies for attaining the target grammar are (by hypothesis, of course) the same.

One parsimonious approach could involve the claim that (all aspects of) any type of language learning can be accounted for by general learning principles not specific to language learning. This line of thinking, in that it is actually entertained seriously by anyone, must wrestle with the signal failure amongst the research community to produce any convincing evidence to support it. A more reasonable approach is therefore to accept for the time being that the learning of a natural language does require special principles of its own and that, if we nevertheless want to maintain as much parsimony as possible despite adhering to this language-specific approach, to make the claim that L1 system-building mechanisms also operate in L2 development albeit with different results. Note that this still allows for some additional features specific to L2 acquisition which may supplement or hinder development.

To rephrase the above argument, when we list all the various

differences in the situation in which L2 learners typically find themselves, we may arrive at a picture of L2 acquisition where the differences seem to outweigh the similarities. But that is not the point at issue. The fact is that it is not easy to exclude the reasonable possibility that the mind can deploy the same basic strategies for building L2 grammars that were deployed for the creation of the mother tongue grammar. Given the enormous complexity of natural language systems as revealed by linguistic research and the deficiency or confusing nature of the information available to learners for inducing all the rules of the L2, and given the above-mentioned lack of theoretical and empirical backing for a general cognitive learning theory, the direction of our thinking should be a parsimonious, language-learning specific explanation of L2 phenomena.

At this juncture it is important to emphasise that a claim, being different from an assumption, requires support. It may well be unwise to *assume* basic similarity between L1 and L2 psycholinguistic processes from a *methodological* point of view since differences can often be trivially discounted as the effect of some 'external' influence. In other words, it is methodologically wiser to adopt the Selinkerian position as a starting point, and then attempt to find evidence against it with the aim of supporting the more parsimonious claim. Evidence can come from at least two sources, either directly from observed learner behaviour or, indirectly, from weaknesses in models supporting the claim that L2 development is fundamentally different.

#### *IL: The Early Model*

As is inevitable with preliminary models designed to stimulate discussion, because of the indeterminate nature of the scope and interaction, various problems arose with the further elaboration of Selinker's (1972) proposals. For example, one has to ask:

- (1) To what extent is language transfer, as a generalisation of L1 rules, actually the *same* central process as his overgeneralisation (see Taylor, 1975)?
- (2) Are Selinker's central processes unique and discrete or can they be contributory factors, i.e. conspire to yield an IL rule or pattern that has more than one underlying explanation?

The status of IL processes in actual millisecond-by-millisecond performance was already unclear in Selinker (1972), and did not become much clearer when Adjemian (1976) placed the IL model within a Chomskyan perspective. Adjemian raised but did not completely clear up the question

of whether IL should be seen primarily as knowledge underlying behaviour or as the systematic aspects of performance behaviour themselves. Was, for example, the IL process that Selinker called language transfer something that turned up only in *performance* in L2? Or was it also a process that worked to change underlying IL knowledge so that IL competence (rather than just performance) could be said to be influenced by L1? In other words, which was permeable to 'invasion' from L1, the performance system or the competence system? If the latter were the case, then IL competence would contain copies of L1 rules which were now employed with L2 lexical and phonological material, as it were. If the latter were the case, learners would not assume L1/L2 equivalence in advance of the evidence but would, by dint of habit, as it were, and against their better judgement, find themselves processing L2 material via performance mechanisms designed for L1, resulting in, for example, L1-based accent and L1-based word order.

Within the framework for analysing IL proposed by Bialystok & Sharwood Smith (1985), the IL hypothesis has to be broken down and restated in terms of (a) *knowledge* system(s) and (b) *control* mechanisms used to manipulate that knowledge in real time. This basic distinction surfaces in the writings of a number of European scholars including Færch and Kasper (see, for example, contributions to Kellerman & Sharwood Smith, 1986). Viewed within a Chomskyan perspective, i.e. in the spirit of Adjemian's paper, some areas of the knowledge underlying performance may be seen as tacit competence falling within the constraints of UG as defined by the theory and as manifested in natural languages. Other areas may be seen as falling within the more general area of knowledge as discussed in the cognitive psychological literature, i.e. gained and constrained by general laws which, perhaps, cover non-linguistic knowledge as well. By 'knowledge', then, is meant mental representations of various aspects of the language system, some falling within the notion of competence (following Chomsky) and some outside.

#### Creative Construction and IL

Creative construction (CC) theory was developed by scholars such as Burt, Dulay and Krashen (see Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982) as an alternative to the IL approach and adopted the parsimonious view sketched out above albeit with some important differences. The CC approach did not involve the notion of a developing interlanguage in the sense of an autonomous learner system although it did allow for IL in some fragmentary sense, that is, in the form of transitional or 'developmental'



patterns occurring in subsystems of the language. These transitional patterns represent deviant but predictable stages which occur prior to the attainment of a particular subtarget within the broad framework of L2 as a whole. Negation and interrogation provide standard examples of such mini-routes, occurring apparently independently of one another following their own specific principles. Nevertheless, different transitional patterns in the CC approach were never unified within a larger perspective as part of IL. Transitional systems in the CC approach are always apparently isolated mini-systems. The focus is on the attainment of native targets throughout the L2 system.

The various claims made by creative construction theorists in the 1970s did not seriously:

- (a) Distinguish between the growth of knowledge (competence) and the development of fluent control over knowledge during actual performance.
- (b) Allow for systematic individual variation in the development of competence (see Cancino, Rosansky & Schumann, 1978).
- (c) Involve a proper application of the principles of the linguistic theory it claimed allegiance to, i.e. generative grammar (cf. Schwartz, 1986).

Despite its valuable role in making people aware of the extent of intuitive processes in L2 acquisition, creative construction thinking in the 1970s fell far short of anything approaching a theoretically interesting explanation of the phenomenon of L2 acquisition. The priority of claiming similarity between the two types of language acquisition led to an insistence on the reduced status of language transfer. Transfer needed to be explained away to keep the claim of L1/L2 equivalence neat and tidy as though transfer in L2 implied non-creative habit-formation and a corresponding commitment to an outmoded learning theory. In short, CC theory was both theoretically promising, theoretically unambitious and myopic.

As mentioned at the outset, we need to be reminded of the fact that the possibility of applying principles specific to L1 in the creation of L2 knowledge is simply not available to acquirers of an L1. Transfer occurring in L2 acquisition may easily be the application of processes available to L1 acquirers but not used crosslinguistically because there was simply no prior linguistic knowledge available to the L1 learner to transfer. Clearly a single process using different input and working on different assumptions may lead to different results. L1 patterns observed in interlanguage suggest that the learner may be assuming L1 principles

apply to L2 and hence creating the IL system with the help of L1 principles. This does not happen in L1 acquisition because there is nothing to transfer. The L1 acquirer is forced to rely on input from outside and the outcome is inevitably different.

Ignoring potential L1 effects in L2 competence on such slender grounds is a major weakness of creative construction theory especially due to the limited nature of their empirical evidence (superficial areas of morphosyntax). It did, however, due to Krashen's Monitor Model, make some headway in defining the role of conscious explicit knowledge in acquisition. Selinker, in his definition of IL, was careful to exclude artificial, classroom-induced language behaviour and focus on the more or less spontaneous, creative processes of L2 development as he saw them (see Lawler & Selinker, 1969). It was Krashen, however, who was the first to clearly define a position on the role of non-spontaneous, reflective processes in L2 performance and L2 development. The resulting hard line, i.e. that conscious knowledge plays no role at all, provided and still provides a useful challenge to the standard assumption that learners just have to be 'told the rule' and everything will be all right.

Despite the little evidence that was first gathered, it seems to be a standard assumption in second language research that subconscious processes are very important and that many of them may well be impervious to outside intervention (either by the learners themselves attempting to apply rules consciously or by teachers attempting to explain, demonstrate and drill rules). This, of course, is not the same as saying all of second language acquisition is beyond such manipulation. The blanket claim (in Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982) that conscious processes have been shown to play no role at all is clearly a misconceived one (see Sharwood Smith 1981; Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1985; Rutherford, 1987a; Gregg, 1988). Since 'language' is best seen in a modular fashion, as composed of different types of system, different kinds of knowledge, then, because we appear to have limited conscious control over many areas of the grammar does not mean that lexical and pragmatic knowledge and also a great deal of morphological knowledge cannot be more efficiently gained by using certain consciousness-raising techniques (see Sharwood Smith (1980) for an early discussion). This possibility did not really come to the fore in the creative construction literature (cf. Schwartz, 1986; Gregg, 1988).

## Heterogeneous IL Competence

Apart from worries about the role of transfer, or as I prefer to call it, 'crosslinguistic influence', and concern about the precise nature and role of conscious knowledge in CC theory, many people have taken issue with the idea that learners develop in the same way and end up with the same system. The objection is often raised that there is great variation in the way people develop. As far as the outcome(s) of development are concerned, there have also been objections to the idea that (either IL or native) language systems may be viewed as homogeneous and that all observed variation should be ascribed to performance phenomena.

In reaction to the notion of an idealised, homogeneous competence which, for some people, has been a core concept in the Chomskyan literature, an alternative view of native speaker ability has arisen, namely one which views competence as heterogeneous in character. What this means is that linguistic rules vary systematically according to the particular use to which they are put. In fact, this has never been a problem in Chomskyan linguistics although it is true that usage aspects have been outside the main thrust of theoretical investigations. The essential modularity of the Chomskyan approach permits a clarification of these issues in that variation according to use can be treated as a separate system (module) obeying different laws. Hence, if the dropping of a subject pronoun in a particular (inter)language (as in '. . . is coming now' or '. . . saw Jane') cannot be accounted for by recourse to some basic principle of grammar, it may well be accounted for perfectly well as a principle of pragmatics: leave out redundant information, drop pronouns denoting topics known to the hearer. The syntax may constrain the shape the grammar takes, i.e. determine whether such omissions are possible and what the syntactic consequences are, but leave entirely open the rules for determining *when* dropping a pronoun is appropriate. In this way, the pragmatic system may also be seen as a type of competence although its rules are different and the way it is acquired may also be different. Even apparently random variation in (inter)language performance at a syntactic level can thus be explained coherently at a pragmatic level without dropping the idea of some set of invariant syntactic principles.

Another kind of variability touched upon in the Chomskyan literature is what might be called 'control variability' (see Bialystok & Sharwood Smith, 1985), that is, variability caused by factors having to do with the on-line processing of competence. Apparently random behaviour may be caused when the language user experiences some kind of stress or overload

due to fatigue or distraction. When the principles of on-line processing are more fully understood, it should be possible to see system in this erratic behaviour as well. Presumably, there are predictable strategies that a processing system will resort to if its available on-line capacity is reduced.

Let us consider two possible reasons for the way in which an IL user might vary his use of particular constructions to convey a given message. Assume, for instance, that there are two alternatives available to express a request in IL English: 'I want' and 'I would like'. The IL grammar and lexicon allow both these possibilities: the question is when and where they are actually used in performance.

In the first case, as a result of hypothesising rules of usage from observed native speaker behaviour, the IL user uses 'I want' in formal and informal speech, and 'I would like' in formal writing. Systematic variation in IL is therefore determined by sociolinguistically based rules which make reference to the context of use. The variation is only detectable at a purely grammatical level: the pragmatics of the learner's IL determine that there is no choice after all. Syntactic variability thus coexists happily with pragmatic determinism.

In the second case, the IL user uses 'I want' only when processing capacity is, for one reason or another, overloaded. Hence, 'I want' functions as the default form, usable in all contexts. 'I would like' is used both in formal and informal speech, and in writing as well. In speech, when there is no processing overload, it varies only with the contracted 'I'd like'. The learner, unlike a native speaker, treats 'I want' as always inappropriate and is aware of this even when forced to use it in overload situations. In this case, he or she performs in defiance of current IL sociolinguistic knowledge (pragmatic competence). We may speculate that the learner has overgeneralised the perceived inappropriateness of 'I want' in some contexts, to all contexts of use.

Systematic variability will, at the very least, have to be explained in terms of at least two kinds of linguistic system (module). We may add to this a further kind of variability, 'cognitive' variability. This is variation due to the indeterminacy of particular areas in competence (see Bialystok & Sharwood Smith, 1985; Sorace, 1985): the IL learners may be in the process of developing a new grammatical, pragmatic (or other type of) rule. This itself may trigger backsliding behaviour (Selinker, 1972) whereby a learner, when pressed, uses the more established or previously fully established IL form as the default option. This is different from the

situation in which learners are pressured to fall back on an L1 structure which they *know* to be deviant.

The explanation of variability Or heterogeneity in terms of different homogeneous systems (modules) possessed by the learners and operating according to different laws is more satisfactory than an approach which seeks to present language users as possessing non-modularised, i.e. a monolithic type of heterogeneous competence. Labov's heterogeneous approach is reflected most obviously (in IL studies) in the work of Tarone (Labov, 1970; Tarone 1979; 1983; 1985) and this relies on *attention to form* as the crucial determinant of variation and hence the type of IL style used. Just as Labov's native speaker of Black English in the United States will give evidence of, say, systematic phonological variation with regard to the formality of the situation, so, too, an IL speaker will produce a different kind of IL when in a casual relaxed mode and when in a strained, formal situation. In both cases, one might ask, in present terms, if the kind of variability we are seeing in the formal situation is occasioned not by sociolinguistic style but rather due to processing overload. In this case, we would have to say that calling the formal IL a 'style' and linking it to a context of use is committing a gross category error, since it is not *sociolinguistic* in origin, but *psycholinguistic*.

Control variability is, in present terms, being confused with variation according to rules of appropriateness (sociolinguistic competence, as it were). This confusion also prompts us to pose the question as to whether studies of native speaker variation often show us native speakers of one dialect actually performing as non-native speakers of another dialect. This other dialect is seen as more appropriate to formal situations but he or she may not necessarily be in complete command of it. In the same way, IL speakers, in given situations and at given stages in their development, may fail to gain control over their competence in formal situations. This leads naturally to the suggestion that the term 'native command' be used not merely to refer to knowledge of correct and appropriate L1 or L2 forms in all relevant types of situation but exclusively to those who can also perform in those situations fluently and spontaneously. In this way, reflecting on IL usage in various circumstances leads us to pose interesting questions about the notion of 'native-speakerhood' which itself may be usefully examined in modular terms.

To sum up, variation can have various sources in both native speaker and IL speaker alike. It can have to do with the variable use of (inter)-linguistic competence in specific contexts, given specific types of situation and speaker intentions. This deployment of linguistic competence in rule-

governed ways follows sociolinguistic or pragmatic principles and hence may be accounted for as part of sociolinguistic/pragmatic competence. IL research can look into ways in which this kind of competence unfolds in the learner. It can also look at the extent to which a given IL user can control the sociolinguistic/pragmatic competence at a given time. This mirrors research into the control of linguistic competence. Variation in control of knowledge of whatever sort must not, in this scheme of things, be confused with the knowledge itself. IL users of English may then variably produce the deviant utterance: 'Has no bike' alongside the non-deviant 'She has no bike', (a) because their IL grammar allows optional dropping of subject pronouns (a linguistic-competence fact), (b) according to a rule which says that subject pronouns are dropped when the context makes them redundant: the hearer already knows the identity of the subject (a sociolinguistic-competence fact). Alternatively, it may happen because the learners, despite the fact that their current linguistic competence disallows the dropping of subject pronouns, have not yet gained full control of this new rule in their grammar. In this third case, variation may vary systematically with the amount of processing load they are faced with in a given situation.

### Concluding Comments

In this paper I have tried, very briefly, to analyse the changing views of IL, and more specifically, what learner grammar entails and I have tried to pinpoint a number of places where theoretical thinking has been vague and in need of refinement. In particular, misconceptions of what competence is and how variation may be accounted for in a Chomskyan approach have led to unnecessary suspicion about this particular paradigm and the role it can play in the total picture of what learner systems involve. One might also argue that proponents of this approach have also been unclear about the nature of competence. In particular, notions such as the idea that IL is grammar, that grammar in a particular sense of the word is the only important thing in language development and that all of grammar is acquired intuitively have all been unwelcome, unhelpful and indeed constitute unjustified inferences from the Chomskyan paradigm.

The most fruitful way of going forward is by assuming that IL, no less than language in the 'native-speaker' sense, is produced and comprehended by means of a battery of mental systems or 'modules' and that different types of explanation will probably be needed for each of these subsystems. Hence any claims about the differences between L1

and L2 acquisition must be answered at the very least per knowledge module. If one believes that the heart of a language system is its grammar, then one can call given observed grammatical similarities across the two types of language acquisition 'crucial' similarities, that is, to the extent they also happen to be considered important phenomena within the grammatical system itself, of course. And, if one wants to apply a particular type of generative linguistic theory to the study of grammatical acquisition, then any resulting claims will have no obvious effect on the claims one wants to make about areas of the language not covered by that particular theoretical framework.

To sum up, a myriad of more precisely formulated questions is needed to consider the character of IL development such as:

(1) How does IL lexical semantic development relate to semantic development in L1?

(2) How does IL pragmatic development relate to L1 pragmatic development?

and other questions of approach, such as:

(3) What theoretical perspective may best be applied/adapted to study L1 and IL phonological development?

and so on. This naturally is not intended to imply that research has to be obsessed with comparing and contrasting IL with child language but is meant as an example of the modular approach to IL research questions in general whether they be focussed on the nature of IL behaviour itself or on relationships between IL and L1 phenomena.

### *References*

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the back of the book.



### SECTION THREE LEARNER STRATEGIES AND PROCESSES

The six chapters in this section are linked principally by their interest in strategies. Learners variously employ strategies to deal with material they have to learn, to maintain communication when linguistic means are inadequate, and to evaluate their first languages as potential knowledge sources for their developing interlanguage grammars. Similarly, teachers will use strategies to enable their students to attend to relevant material. Strategies were grist to Claus Færch's scholarly mill too. He wrote extensively and sagely about the psychological and sociological status of communication strategies (the topic of Yule & Tarone's chapter and of Kellerman's); about the psychological basis of what has come to be called *crosslinguistic influence*, that is, how the learning of one language can be affected by another (the concern of Ringbom's chapter); about the way learners set about learning in the classroom and how they might be helped to do better (the respective focusses of Cohen's and Gass's chapters); and about how learners use inferencing procedures for interpreting texts (the subject of Haastrup's chapter). Færch's influence pervades this entire section.

In his chapter, Cohen expresses the belief that we need to make learners aware of successful learning strategies so that they may become better learners. Consciousness-raising is the key term here. Cohen sums up a great deal of research into the strategies used by successful learners in such activities as attending to relevant material, speaking, learning words, reading and writing. The basic claim is that by observing good language learners at work and making use of the insights they provide us via introspection we will come to a better understanding of the processes involved in successful learning. From that point it is only a short (if complex) step to the establishment of learner training programmes. Cohen's discussion of the various strategies that learners appear to use in the above domains offers fascinating insights into the various ways

learners set about coping with a second language. If he remains unsure about the ultimate efficacy of learner training programmes, he is clearly confident that they are worth embarking on.

Haastrup's chapter deals with the strategies by means of which learners interpret written texts in the foreign language. What makes her contribution particularly interesting is that her learners are involved in a co-operative act of interpretation, puzzling in pairs over meanings of unfamiliar words and verbalising their thoughts. Their think-aloud protocols show how they set about arriving at interpretations of unfamiliar lexical items. Their inferencing strategies are discussed in terms of a model of language comprehension (Flores d'Arcais & Schreuder, 1983) constructed to explain understanding in a first language. Of course there are obvious differences in the ways that individual native speakers process spoken input on-line, millisecond by millisecond, and the ways that second language learners infer meanings via slow and deliberate reflection on a printed page in tandem, but this is not to deny the obvious gain in theoretical rigour from pointing out the similarities in the two processes and the usefulness of being able to discuss one's findings in terms of a model designed to account for native speaker comprehension. The model provides us with a means of explaining the variable performance of pairs in arriving at correct lexical inferences. Less proficient learners seem less able to make use of contextual cues than their more advanced peers, treating inferencing more as a linguistic puzzle than an exercise in text interpretation. Like Cohen, Haastrup is hopeful that specific types of teaching can improve learners' abilities to infer meanings from texts; certainly her own classroom experience leads her to contend that consciousness-raising based on introspection will pay dividends.

Gass looks at a traditional aspect of the classroom curriculum, the teaching of grammar. Noting that grammar teaching has become unfashionable in the welter of communicative teaching that learners are currently exposed to, she proposes a new teaching strategy using formal grammar to help learners restructure their interlanguages by getting them to perceive the discrepancy between the rules of the target language and their own provisional rules. Explicit grammar teaching thus serves as a selective attention device, a first necessary step in making the learner aware of the need for modification. Consciousness-raising again. And a similar role for the much-maligned technique of error correction in that it provides the learner with necessary negative evidence. Gass cites three recent pieces of research which show that explicit instruction works in short-circuiting 'natural' language development of grammatical structures. All three studies concern the learning of various types of

restrictive relative clauses and all show an advantage in performance for those receiving explicit teaching over those who do not.

Kellerman also deals in detail with one of the skills learners possess to a greater or lesser extent the ability to communicate despite linguistic inadequacies. Like Haastrup, he is concerned specifically with lexical deficits. However, unlike Haastrup, and Cohen, for that matter, he is at pains to point out that there is sufficient evidence that learners are fully able to utilise the strategic competence they possess by virtue of being native speakers of their L1s when they operate in a second language. Any apparent inability of learners to communicate effectively may have more to do with the lack of specific language required to produce a strategy or to the inhibitory atmosphere of the classroom than with an inability to use strategies effectively. Kellerman also argues that second language communication strategies are simply one manifestation of a whole range of similar strategies commonly in use in native speaker interaction and should be studied as such. Additionally, Kellerman is critical of most attempts at setting up taxonomies of communication strategies as these are based on conflicting and inexplicit criteria and thus have doubtful psychological validity. An alternative taxonomy is suggested.

On the same topic, but with no teaching axe to grind, is the chapter by Yule & Tarone. The authors rightly question the value of second language research which studies the role of input in second language acquisition solely from the point of view of speech addressed to the learner. Instead they believe that a more valid approach to the study of input and the negotiation of meaning between interlocutors can be found in the way that communication strategies have traditionally been examined. To take one example offered by Yule & Tarone, it isn't the native speaker's 'request for clarification' that leads to mutual comprehension, but the learner's response to that request. Consequently, studies of input must look at 'both sides of the page' (i.e. the contribution of both interlocutors), with particular attention being paid to the learner's communication strategies, since it is these that largely determine the course that negotiation will take and the sort of input directed at the learner.

Ringbom's chapter looks at what is a most interesting language-learning situation Swedish-speaking and Finnish-speaking Finns learning English in Åbo, Finland. One culture and two native languages. Like Haastrup and Kellerman, Ringbom's main concern is with words, in this case how the two native language backgrounds affect strategies for developing L2 English lexicons. The author stresses the importance of

perceived linguistic difference as a factor in determining whether and to what extent one language will influence the learning of another, though the L1 may also be pressed into service as an emergency procedure to maintain communication when knowledge of the L2 is minimal. In the former case, we would want to say that some L1 feature is part of the learner's IL competence; in the latter, we would want to talk about a communication strategy. One factor which pervades all language learning, says Ringbom, is the desire to reduce the learning burden to a minimum; the exploitation of perceived typological proximity is one strategy for doing this. Ringbom's is a detailed and highly informative account of the ways in which crosslinguistic influence can manifest itself lexically.

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How many times does a teacher exclaim, 'Why, we already covered that in class!' or 'But you learned that last Friday!'? Indeed, the teacher may in fact teach a number of things that are not learned by the students, or at least not learned in the way that the teacher envisioned. The teacher may have a certain agenda and the student an entirely different one. In other words, the content of instruction or teaching methods may be inappropriate for certain learners, depending on their level of language development and their individual learning styles. In the last few years it has become increasingly evident that teachers need to look more to the learners themselves to gain insights as to the language learning process for example, to find out more about what is learned from what is actually taught, and how it is learned.

If we accept the claim that much of the mastery that a learner gains in a second language accrues through an unconscious process of acquisition (Krashen, 1982), and is not the result of conscious learning, then we need not worry so much about what kind of conscious learning the learner indulges in. If, however, we view conscious learning as having a significant role to play, then the insights we can gain from successful second language learners have value in enhancing the learning of the less successful learners. This chapter takes the view that there is a substantial contribution that conscious language learning on the part of the student can make in the development of second language skills. The teacher is considered to have an important role in this endeavour as facilitator of learning.

In the last decade, the interest in improving conscious second language learning has increased so dramatically that there is now an

identifiable movement in the direction of learner training. At one time, a teacher here or there may have devoted an hour or two at the start of a course to discussing how students could improve their learning patterns in the course. Now, entire training programmes exist expressly for this purpose (see, for example, Rubin & Thompson, 1982; O'Malley *et al.*, 1985; Willing, 1989; Wenden, 1986; Grala, Oxford & Schlepppegrell, 1987; Dickinson, 1987; Oxford, 1990; Cohen, 1990). The following are some of the basic premisses motivating the concern for learner training, as articulated in a state-of-the-art paper by Rubin (1987):

- (1) Some language learners are more successful than others, and these successful learners may differ from one another in how they succeed, depending upon the learning style (among other things). For example, some learners write down an expression once or twice and they know it. For others, such an activity would be a waste of time, but hearing the expression used once or twice works well for them.
- (2) The learning process includes both explicit and implicit knowledge, such that for some learners in some tasks, conscious attention to the learning process is the first step in making language automatic. Such awareness can improve the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of information. For example, if a learner becomes aware that writing down spoken language is not going to facilitate learning, then that learner may choose to focus more on just listening to the language. Therefore, consciousness-raising can contribute to language learning.
- (3) Successful strategies can be used to good effect by less successful learners.
- (4) Teachers can promote learning strategy use.
- (5) Once learners have a clear idea of how they go about learning a second language, they can become the best judges as to how they learn most effectively both in and out of class.

One major aim of learner training is to ensure that average learners do not waste their valuable time while in language courses, simply because they do not know how to go about learning effectively. We have all heard testimonials from erstwhile language learners about how they spent two or three years in a foreign language classroom and do not remember a word of the language. This phenomenon happens repeatedly. What this means on a practical level, for example, is that potential learners may not attend adequately to the input that they are exposed to in class. When opportunities to speak arise, they may not enlist the strategies for speaking that are available to them. Furthermore, even though they may

recognise vocabulary to be a key to success in language learning, they let new words slip through their grasp through lack of an effective means to hold on to these words. They also may become frustrated with attempts to read if, in fact, they do not know how to go about it successfully. Finally, when asked to write, they may do so with greater effort than necessary and with poorer results.

We might expect that learners who are good readers or writers in their native language would likewise be successful at these skills in a second language. To some extent this is the case, but not exclusively. The fact is that second language learners, particularly those with less proficiency in the second language, seem to forget the successful strategies they employ in their first language when faced with second language tasks. If they become more mindful of what they are doing and of how this may contribute to their success, their results as learners may be more satisfactory.

As indicated in the last premiss stated above, consciousness-raising calls for a shift in attitude about the role of the language learner. Some learners may be used to assuming the attitude of the passive consumer: 'Here I am, teacher. Come, do it to me. Teach me what you can about this language. If I don't learn, it's your fault.' In an approach where the learner becomes aware of the learning process wherever possible, this learner also assumes a generally more active role in achieving success. Success is then no longer an accident, but the product of careful planning and execution of a series of strategies (i.e. conscious activities aimed at producing learning) that work for that learner.

In some cases, success may even result in cases where the particular teacher or teaching method is not naturally supportive of the ways that the given learners best achieve their goals. For example, learners who thrive on learning languages through meaningful communication may find themselves in a grammar-based approach with little opportunity for genuine communication. The challenge for them is then to supplement the classroom lessons with communication outside of class with native speakers or advanced learners, or find ways of encouraging the teacher to introduce more communicative activities into the classroom. Learners could also create utterances that they really want to say from the homework exercises, and check with the teacher as to the appropriateness of those utterances.

In the remainder of this chapter, we will discuss some of the strategies that good language learners use. Clearly, there is no one best way to be a successful learner. Rather, each successful learner has a



distinct set of strategies, but usually there is substantial overlap from one good learner to another. The insights to be discussed below are derived from research with language learners. Such research has entailed more than simply sitting in a classroom and watching learners perform. As a result of hours of such classroom observation, it has become clear that such an approach is not very revealing of learner strategies because many learners do not say revealing things in class, if they speak up at all.

Consequently, other approaches have been employed, such as having learners think aloud as they perform certain tasks, like reading a passage or writing an essay. Learners have also been asked to observe what they are doing and to report their observations, either introspectively (as soon as these events took place) or retrospectively (after the events were over). The think-aloud approach is intended to get learners to provide unanalysed, unedited insights into what they are doing. The self-observation method (introspection and retrospection) has the intention of involving the learner more in the analysis process (see, for example, Hosenfeld, 1977; 1979; Cohen & Aphek, 1981; Cohen & Hosenfeld, 1981; Cohen, 1984; 1987c). In all cases, the purpose has been to identify and describe the kinds of strategies that learners use to accomplish language learning tasks.

Whereas there has been some scepticism concerning the role that learners themselves can play in describing their strategies, it is becoming clear that learners have something to say and that this something can contribute to the design of a course of instruction (see Seliger (1983a) for a sceptical view and Cohen (1984) for a reply). Some of the unobservable learner behaviours in the classroom that have been and can be explored include the following:

- (1) How actively do learners participate in class, particularly when 'it is not their turn'? Do the learners view these instances as an opportunity to tune out or as an opportunity to tune in to what is happening with a fellow student in class? Do learners only attend to what the teacher says, or do they rarely attend to what the teacher says?
- (2) How do learners deal with teacher feedback regarding their oral or written language? If they are corrected, what do they do with the corrections? If they pay attention to these corrections, in what ways do they process them?
- (3) How do learners handle new vocabulary? Do they screen out words according to certain procedures? Do they keep lists and if so, what kinds?

(4) How do students take notes? What do they write down and why? How do they use those notes later if at all?

(5) How much similarity is there between what the teacher thinks is easy/difficult in the lesson and what the learner thinks is easy/difficult?

Let us now look at some of the strategies that learners have been observed using while attending in class, speaking, learning vocabulary, reading, and writing. These data are considered to be simply illustrative of the types of data available about what learners do and do not do in and out of the classroom.

#### Attending in the Classroom

An important reason for a learner to be in a language classroom is that the teacher and the other students are likely to provide language input that is comprehensible (Krashen, 1982). Nevertheless, in order for the input to have maximum impact, the learners must be open to it. In reality, learners may find themselves exhibiting patterns of selective and only partial attention. For example, it is possible to attend only partially to well-practiced routines those that are more automatic, such as certain types of drills or reading aloud. The teacher may consequently get the false impression that the learner is engaged more fully than is actually the case. And in order to look good, students may purposely give the teacher the impression that they are engaged more fully than they really are. This may be done through continual nods of the head or eye contact. It may be done through asking questions now and again possibly even questions that the learner actually knows the answer to (as Bailey (1980) reports doing). It may be done through counting ahead to find the line(s) that the learner will most likely be asked to read, so as to appear on top of the material when the time comes (Hosenfeld, 1976).

Since it is easy to tune out in the classroom, it would appear beneficial for learners to employ attention-enhancing strategies. One such attention strategy during whole-class frontal lessons would be for learners to respond silently to tasks asked of other students in the class not just to wait until it is their turn. Active listening and attending would also involve a continual search for the meaning in utterances. Good learners use a number of strategies in their search for meaning. For example, they make use of:

- (1) the knowledge that they have of the world;
- (2) their knowledge of the given topic;

- (3) their knowledge of expected utterances for the given context;
- (4) cues from prior utterances within the discourse;
- (5) cues from the stress that individual words have received;
- (6) their knowledge of the speaker, his/her tone of voice and body language.

The point is that good learners stay open to input, even if they do not understand everything. They are good observers of what is going on around them. When things are not clear, they may create interactions in which they can find out what they do not understand. For example, this may mean that learners raise their hand when something is not clear in order to obtain clarification. In smaller group interactions, there is more of an opportunity for them to do this.

In a one-on-one situation, it may mean that while having a native speaker tell them something, the learner may break in from time to time with a short summary of what they thought was said in order to check their comprehension. Research has shown, for example, that receiving input is not enough, but rather that there may need to be negotiation for meaning as well in order to make the incoming speech truly comprehensible (Long, 1981). Now let us look at strategies for successful speaking.

### Speaking

We have learned that successful speakers are willing to talk and willing to make errors. They may well be more extrovert (Cohen, 1977). What may not be so obvious is that they may not pay attention to error correction if it does not suit their purposes at hand. If, for example, they are concerned about communicating a message, it may be irrelevant to them at that moment that they have selected the wrong morphological form or the wrong lexical choice, as long as their interlocutor understood what they wanted to say. At another moment, this same speaker may be all ears to hearing and processing corrections. In fact, successful speakers may well request that they be corrected only once they are done talking, if at all. They are aware that many of their errors will clear up in the process of language development.

If, for instance, errors are a result of thinking in the native language and transferring that language's forms over to the target language, such errors will most likely decrease as the learner becomes more proficient in the second language. If the errors are a result of making false generalisations within the language being learned, such errors will also

clear up as the learner has more exposures to the variety of forms in the target language and to exceptions to rules.

Part of successful speaking among learners is being able to make choices about what forms to use and how to use them, while not having these considerations may be at the expense of communication. In other words, at times it may be necessary to compromise principles regarding the form of the message in order to convey the desired message. This actually leads us to the issue of communication strategies. In other words, successful second-language speakers use a variety of communication strategies to keep conversation going (see Færch & Kasper, 1983b). Some might also avoid certain topics that they do not yet feel they have the vocabulary to discuss. Or, if they do not know how to say something one way, they may use a paraphrase rather than remaining silent. In addition, they may utilise their interlocutor to provide assistance each time their knowledge falters (for more on communication strategies, see Tarone, Cohen & Dumas, 1976; Tarone, 1981; Poulisse, 1987; Kellerman, this volume).

These appeals for assistance may *not*, in fact, be strategies for learning, but rather solely ploys for communicating. In other words, a listener may be prompted to provide the learner with a word or two along the way, and the learner may make no effort to learn that word. The appeal is simply to make sure that the listener was following and to keep the conversation going. This in turn provides the learner with more input from which to benefit in the learning process. Learners who encourage input have been referred to as 'high input generators' (Seliger, 1983b). There are times, of course, when the speaker may well make an effort to learn a word that is supplied when there is time for processing the word, interest, a focus on new forms, and adequate knowledge so as to know what to do with the form. A frontal lesson may provide more time for processing a word than a small-group session or one-on-one in that the learner is likely to be engaged in conversation for a shorter period of time, allowing for more time for processing the input that has been generated. The issue of processing words brings us to our next topic which is what learners do with new vocabulary.

### Vocabulary Learning

The learning of vocabulary in a second language is an area in which strategies can be most useful. The number of unknown words always seems to outweigh the number of known words, and for learners without

good rote memories, the task can seem at times insurmountable. It would appear that under any circumstances, learners do some screening out of vocabulary upon contact with the words (Cohen & Aphek, 1979). In explaining this process of elimination Levenston (1979) draws on empirical evidence to suggest that learners may prefer to deal with new words that are:

- (1) easy to pronounce;
- (2) morphologically regular (i.e. without irregular inflections);
- (3) syntactically clear;
- (4) equivalent in meaning to words in the native language (or in some other language that the learner knows);
- (5) occurring frequently in speech or in writing;
- (6) generalisable to various contexts;
- (7) semantically simple (not having multiple meanings, particularly when such meanings seem unreasonable).

Once it is determined what words will be learned, the question arises as to how the particular learner can best learn these. In the best of situations, the teacher will make the best possible use of background experience and teaching materials in order to provide the learner with a rich exposure to vocabulary. The approach to vocabulary learning that favours natural acquisition or automatic learning would suggest that the learner need not make any special effort to learn vocabulary. The contention is that with meaningful exposure to words, these words will naturally become a part of the learner's language. Yet for those without much exposure to the language or those who need vocabulary quickly, it would seem that strategies are in order. In fact, language learners rely heavily on associations between the words that are being learned and something else. Often such associations are not systematic. It has been shown that systematic approaches to associating the words to be learned to some cognitive mediator yields beneficial results (Bellezza, 1981; Levin, 1981; Paivio & Desrochers, 1981; Pressley, Levin & Delaney, 1982; Cohen, 1987b).

Learner responses to a questionnaire (Cohen & Aphek, 1979) indicated that at least the following types of associations were being used in second language learning:

- (1) noting the structure of part of the word (e.g. the root or an affix) or all of it;
- (2) linking the word to the sound of a word in the native language, to the sound of a word in the language being learned, or to the sound of a word in another language;

- (3) attending to the meaning of a part or several parts of the word;
- (4) creating a mental image of the word;
- (5) linking the word to the situation in which it appears;
- (6) placing the word in the topic group in which it belongs;
- (7) associating some physical sensation to the word;
- (8) visualising the word in isolation or in a written context.

Learners often use combinations of these types of associations. Perhaps the best known form of association is that of the keyword mnemonic. In this case, there is an acoustic link i.e. a native language word or phrase that is similar in sound to part or all of the second language word and an imagery link an image of the keyword 'interacting' with the native language word or phrase (Atkinson, 1975). The keyword technique thus involves combining associational types 1. and 7. from the above list. For example, in order to learn the Spanish word *pato* 'duck', English-speaking learners are shown a picture of a duck with a pot on its head or the learners picture it themselves. When they are asked the meaning of *pato*, this evokes the keyword 'pot', which in turn re-evokes the image of the duck wearing the pot (Levin, 1981).

If the word being learned is abstract, then it may be necessary to use a two-stage recall procedure. For example, in order to learn the Hebrew word for 'resentment', *tina*, an English-speaking learner could select as the keyword 'teenager' and envision a teenager washing the dishes resentfully. Then when given the word *tina*, the learner has to make the acoustic link to 'teenager' and then is to call up the image of the resentful teenager washing dishes.

Many adult learners feel that vocabulary is the key to success. Yet many of these same learners do not make use of systematic strategies for learning, storing, and retrieving words. Ironically, some learners even comment that they have so many words to learn that they do not have time to play around with mnemonics tricks for learning these words. The truth is, however, that use of mnemonics can enable the learner to memorise necessary routines (such as sets of vocabulary) more effectively so that the mind can be freed to spend time on tasks requiring understanding and reasoning (Levin, 1981).

Unlike adults, younger learners may not be so consciously aware of the vocabulary needs that they may have. This may, for the most part, be to their advantage in that they simply acquire a good deal of vocabulary, especially concrete language. All the same, there may be words that keep slipping away from them because they are not using some sort of mnemonic aid. Thus, there may be some payoff to heightening the

awareness of memory techniques among younger learners as well.

Let us now move on to two other skill areas for which successful strategies have been seen to play a dramatic role, namely in reading and in writing a second language.

### Reading

In the field of second language reading, we have discovered that potentially good readers may not realise their potential simply because they neglect to utilise productive reading strategies. Hosenfeld (1979), for example, described the case of a ninth-grade English-speaking student of French who demonstrated poor reading skills until she became aware of strategies that she could benefit from using. This non-native reader studied a list of strategies that good readers have been found to use, and she selected from that list those strategies that she did not use but that she suspected would improve her reading. She tried them out in her own reading and the improvement was dramatic.

The following are some of the strategies that good second language readers are likely to use to a lesser or greater extent as they read:

- (1) clarify their purpose for reading the material at hand;
- (2) look for how the reading material is organised;
- (3) distinguish important points from trivia;
- (4) jump around in order to get a good sense of where the piece is going;
- (5) read for meaning using as fully as possible their world knowledge, their knowledge of the particular subject matter, and their knowledge of linguistics;
- (6) read in broad phrases (not word-for-word);
- (7) rely on contextual clues (preceding and following context), vocabulary analysis, and grammar to interpret unknown words, rather than referring all the time to the dictionary or a glossary;
- (8) keep the previous material in mind while moving on to new material, and make ongoing summaries of what was read;
- (9) make predictions regarding what the next portion of text will be about;
- (10) look for markers of cohesion (i.e. connectives, pronominal reference, lexical repetition or substitution, and the like).

If good readers become aware that they have failed to comprehend something, then they usually take corrective action. How this is done



depends on the individual reader. Some readers may at this point look more carefully at certain vocabulary words perhaps ones that they skipped over during the first reading. Other readers may scrutinise one or more syntactic structures involved. Others may review the basic organisation of the piece again. Some may do all of these, plus other things as well. Again, as with other skill areas, what the learners do in the way of monitoring their comprehension is less important than the very fact that they are engaged in comprehension monitoring (see Brown (1980) for more on comprehension monitoring).

## Writing

Let us now briefly look at effective strategies that language learners use in the process of writing. Second language researchers have begun to look at this process both through students' reporting about their composing and through concurrent videotaping of the writing itself (Zamel, 1983; Jones, 1984; Raimes, 1987). The picture that emerges is similar to that of reading in that the product is unquestionably influenced by the strategies used in producing it. The better second language writers seem to have better control over these strategies.

Perhaps the most basic of these strategies is to know how to juggle successfully high-, middle-, and low-level goals, and how to shift from one level to the other during the writing process. The high-level goals concern the basic direction of the writing, the general organisation of ideas, and so forth. The middle-level goals relate to the realisation of this direction, of these ideas, through definition, explanation, illustration, or whatever. The low-level goals relate to the form of the writing lexical choice, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so forth. The better writers are able to tolerate dissonance at one level while functioning at another. For example, they are able to postpone editing for grammar and spelling while they are getting their ideas on paper. If they do not know a word in the target language, they might jot down the native language word or an estimate of the target language word, with a mark indicating that this needs to be checked later. The main point is that they make sure that they get their ideas down on paper first. The following are some of the other things that good second-language writers report doing:

(1) engaging in retrospective structuring i.e. going back to go forward (which would mean, for example, reading over the last

several sentences before proceeding ahead with any more writing);

(2) repeating key words and phrases, using parallel structures, selecting conjunctions and pronominal reference carefully all to promote cohesion in the writing (i.e. the glue that holds the ideas together);

(3) writing multiple drafts.

The process of retrospective structuring (e.g. reading the last two sentences over before continuing to write) has been found to contribute to the cohesion of the piece. If the poorer writers see their task as that of plugging along, churning out word after word in a linear fashion, then their product will be an artifact of such a process. Not only do better writers go back before going ahead, they also have a sense of how to conjoin material whether by subordination, co-ordination, or superordination and they use conjunctive phrases that are meaningful to them. They are aware that good writing is a process of exploration and of discovery, and that it is unlikely to result from one single draft, but only as a result of several drafts. Finally, it could be said that successful writers have an effective repertoire for processing teacher feedback in order to get the most out of it (Cohen, 1987a).

## Conclusions

This paper has drawn attention to the importance of looking at how learners go about the process of learning a second language. The claim has been made that insights accrued from this effort can have value in enhancing the learning experience of those learners who do not naturally arrive at successful learning strategies. It was pointed out that consciousness-raising is perhaps the crucial factor here. Since there may not be a single best way to learn given language material, awareness on the part of learners as to what does and does not work for them may be the most important thing. It was also noted that learner training involves a shift from the view that the teacher and the method are responsible for the learners' success to one which sees the learner as ultimately responsible for a successful learning experience.

This paper has provided examples of some strategies that research has shown to be successful in the skill areas of attending, speaking, vocabulary learning, reading, and writing. These examples are in many ways illustrative in that research has just begun to identify what learners actually do as opposed to what teachers and the learners themselves might think they do. Furthermore, it is not clear yet how generalisable

such strategies really are, given differences in learning styles from learner to learner. Finally, it is not clear how best to go about the process of training learners to be more effective learners, nor whether such training needs to be explicit, or whether it can be built into a curriculum more implicitly. It is clear that both teachers and learners can benefit from answers to these questions.

#### Notes

1. Much of my own work reported on in this paper was influenced both directly and indirectly by gentle and insightful input from Claus Færch. I will be forever indebted to him for the profound effect he had upon my research in the field of language learning.

#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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## Procedural Knowledge in Comprehension

Two types of communicative knowledge have been recognised: declarative and procedural (Anderson, 1976; Widdowson, 1979; Færch & Kasper, 1983a). As Dechert (1983) writes:

To learn a language means to learn words and sentences, but also to learn the procedures to retrieve and process them. To know a language means to have both declarative and procedural knowledge. (Dechert, 1983: 176)

During the last decade the study of declarative knowledge, i.e. 'knowledge that', has been supplemented by studies of procedural knowledge, i.e. 'knowledge how'. In this article the focus will be on the kind of procedural knowledge that relates to the psycholinguistic levels of production and comprehension. As to production (comprising verbal planning), procedural knowledge is responsible for the selection of linguistic knowledge relative to an established communicative goal. In comprehension, the processing of input, for instance working bottom-up or top-down, is dependent on procedural knowledge.

Most empirical studies have been concerned with procedural knowledge in production, notably the use of communication strategies (Færch & Kasper, 1983b; Poullisse, Bongaerts & Kellerman, 1984). Analyses of language learners' use of communication strategies have aroused considerable interest among foreign language teachers and contributed to an increased understanding of how important it is to

encourage learners' creativity and problem-solving skills, and so develop their strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). While in production learners use communication strategies to compensate for the absence of words for which they have meanings, in comprehension inferencing strategies are needed to compensate for the absence of meanings attached to unknown words. In a recent study I have investigated inferencing, which is considered the central procedure in comprehension (Haastrup, 1991). The emphasis in that study, as well as in this chapter, is on a special type of inferencing I call *lexical* inferencing.

### Studying Learners' Lexical Inferencing Procedures

The process of lexical inferencing involves making informed guesses as to the meaning of a word in the light of all available linguistic cues in combination with the learner's general knowledge of the world, her awareness of the co-text and her relevant linguistic knowledge (Haastrup, 1991, based on Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson, 1984).

In order to get as close as possible to learners' mental procedures I use introspective methods in the form of pair think-aloud sessions followed by retrospection (for a methodological discussion see Haastrup, 1987). An excerpt from a think-aloud protocol, Text 9.1 below, provides the reader with an impression of the design: a pair of Danish learners are asked to discuss the meaning of an unknown word in a text, following which they are interviewed individually about the procedures they adopted. The discussion from both sessions is tape-recorded.

#### Text 9.1

(A and B are discussing the word 'squalor' in the sentence 'People are killed by the conditions they live under, the lack of food and money and the *squalor*.' The discussion, which takes place in Danish, has been translated into English except for the word focussed on, 'squalor').

A: hygiene

B: yes hygiene a proper place to live in

A: and /skweilə/ could it not be you don't die because of a house this can't be it

B: but it is possible to die because of the conditions you live under

A: it couldn't be fever could it

B: no I don't think so

A: or pollution

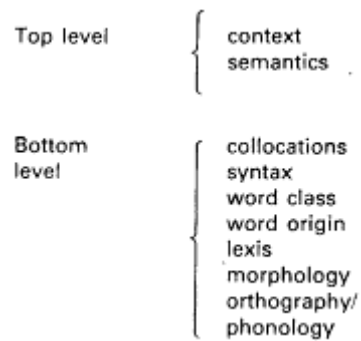


Figure 9.1  
Hierarchy of cue levels

B: down there pollution is not so bad where there is malnutrition

A: the squalor couldn't it be infection . . .

Text 9.1 illustrates the utilisation of one type of information, that is, the learners' general knowledge of the world. In the study drawn on in this paper the learners come from Danish upper and lower secondary schools. Two groups are represented, namely learners with high English proficiency and learners with low English proficiency. 1

In order to give an account of what cues to meaning learners use, a hierarchy of cue levels was established with a distinction between a top level and bottom level. See Figure 9.1.

The top level is constituted by the knowledge system, i.e. conceptual knowledge or schematic knowledge in other words what the informant brings with her from her L1, together with the new or revised schemata she has developed through her contacts with the L2. Complementarily, the bottom level is constituted by the language system, i.e. the informant's knowledge of the L2 at the various linguistic levels.

It is in accordance with current theory within comprehension to acknowledge a top and bottom level, but it is not altogether clear where the demarcation line is between the two.2 Given the concern of this

chapter, L2 processing at word level, I have drawn the line so that the top is constituted by the levels of context and semantics.

Whereas the study comprises a number of analyses, this chapter will focus on the learners' ability (or inability) to find cues from the top and bottom levels and to integrate these in order to arrive at word meaning.

### Typical Problems for Low-Proficiency Learners

We shall now look at examples of what informants do when processing the test word 'insatiable'. 3 Three informant pairs are represented, the first of which focus on bottom cues, the second on top cues, while the third are aware of cues from both levels.

The test word appears in the following context:

. . . some of the Zulu clans were ruled by a king called Chaka. He was a clever military leader with *insatiable* political ambitions. He won most of southeastern Africa and united all the Zulu clans into one great empire, the Zulu nation.

The retrospection sessions, like the think-aloud sessions, took place in Danish. In the following examples 'R' refers to the researcher.

#### Text 9.2

Test word: 'insatiable'

(Two L1 cues are used: *stabile*, which can be translated as 'stable', and *instabile*, which is translated as 'unstable'.)

#### Think-aloud

#### Retrospection

A:

[In'stætI'eIbl] R: how did you arrive at stable?

B: stable      B: I think it looks like it

A: unstable    R: why did you suggest unstable?

B: stable      A: when in- is placed there I thought it was  
the opposite

A: unstable

A pronounces the word 'insatiable' as [In'stætI'eIbl] and associates it with the Danish word *instabile*; it seems likely that she uses a phonological cue (hence the mispronunciation), whereas B focusses on the orthographic cue ('it looks like it'). For A the morphological cue, the prefix 'in-', is dominant. It is concluded that the two informants share a bottom-level focus, as there is no evidence in the protocols of attempts at testing their hypotheses against higher levels (cf. the



hierarchy in Figure 9.1). Such procedures will be referred to as *bottom-level ruled*.

### Text 9.3

Test word: 'insatiable'

#### Think-aloud

#### Retrospection 4

A: this Was because it said further on in the  
A: it must be text that this empire went to the dogs in the  
something like end after all that is why they have been  
great he had enormous or it has been a little exaggerated  
great ambitions what he believed in at that point

B: yes great (A  
and B giggle)  
why didn't  
they just write  
big or great?

A: great or  
enormous

R: had it something to do with the word  
itself?

A: no it was the context it was placed in if  
anything

In contrast to the pair in Text 9.2, the pair in Text 9.3 find their cues at the top level, using the co-text. Whereas many other low-proficiency learners stick to the immediate co-text, the sentence containing the test word, the present pair have the good sense to go beyond that and look for further information about King Chaka's merits (cf. the context of the test word above Text 9.2).

Top-level processing as we saw it in Text 9.3 may be an optimal type for words without linguistic cues, but L2 learners also use it frequently for words for which there are linguistic cues. The test word 'insatiable' contains no less than three cues ('in-', 'satisfy' or 'satisfaction', '-able'). In Text 9.3 there is underuse of linguistic cues and over-dependence on context, whereas Text 9.2 showed us informants who did not consider context at all. It is characteristic of low-proficiency learners that they make either too little or too much use of context. The results of my study indicate that adequate use of context is a major problem in L2 learners' comprehension.

Text 9.4 illustrates a situation in which one informant experiences a conflict between top-level cues and bottom-level cues:

## Text 9.4

*Think-aloud**Retrospection*

A: ins

B: in- u- something or other (A and B have several goes at the pronunciation during which /sæ'fɪəbl/ and /seɪfəbəl/ are repeated)

B: he must have been clever because it looks as if he made good progress isn't it something with great great political ambitions or good or strong must be something with u-

A: great political ambitions write that down

B: no I'm not sure

R: why do you think it is u-?

B: in-

B: good ambitions with which he was able to convince many people since he won such victories . . . very positive word at least

R: is it something with u-

B: not necessarily I don't know

A: we agreed on great from the context you see he united much of it

Informant B is aware that the English prefix 'in-' corresponds to the Danish prefix 'u-', which she obviously associates with something negative, as in words like 'inconvenient' and 'indecent'. However, the co-text gives her the impression that the King's ambitions are 'great, good or strong', and she cannot decide whether top-level cues or bottom-level cues are to prevail, as indicated by her last utterances in both protocols. Such processing is referred to here as 'conflict of ruling'.

I have chosen to quote examples about a test word with linguistic cues that were expected to be fairly transparent (based on pre-testing results). As it turned out, many informants actually knew the words 'satisfy' and 'satisfaction', when asked after the completion of the retrospection session. 5 For other test items such as 'contributory' and 'curative', it was also the case that many informants knew the related words 'contribute' and 'cure'. Their inferencing problems were thus not caused by lack of declarative linguistic knowledge, but rather by their failure to activate relevant knowledge. My study supports what the above examples have demonstrated, namely that many learners tackle the inferencing task ineffectively due to shortcomings in procedural knowledge.

## A Model of L2 Comprehension at Word Level

The lexical inferencing study is situated at the intersection between a vocabulary study and a comprehension study. 6 In this article I have chosen to concentrate on the latter aspect.

L2 comprehension is often assumed to be much like L1 comprehension (Brown, 1986a), although empirical reading research provides evidence of learner procedures that differ from native speaker ones (Alderson & Urquhart, 1984). There are probably many reasons why specific L2 comprehension models have not been proposed. One is that comprehension models are very general, covering for instance both sentence and text levels. A result of this high level of generality is that the models are difficult to verify or falsify empirically. Another related aspect is that theoretical research, i.e. model building, and practical reading research seem to have developed separately. Finally, some researchers prefer to study comprehension processes 'uncluttered by notions of language learning', (Brown, 1986a).

All in all it seems safe to conclude that it is difficult to accommodate the variety of perspectives on comprehension within one model. Consequently I want to emphasise that when I propose a specific L2 comprehension model, this is biased towards word level processing and may not be generalisable to sentence or text level.

The impetus behind my proposal for a specific L2 model is my protocol analyses. The learners in my study use much ineffective processing, as exemplified above, notably bottom-level rule (Text 9.2) and conflict of ruling (Text 9.4), and such processing is not accommodated within an L1 model. Moreover, even my high-proficiency group show traits that are not generally acknowledged in L1 comprehension.

Having argued that there are differences between L1 and L2 comprehension, I now go on to propose an L2 model that is based on an L1 model. This may seem paradoxical, but it is feasible for two reasons. First, at a high level of generality there are strong similarities between L1 and L2 comprehension, which speaks in favour of adopting the same overall framework. Secondly, if one ventures into unexplored territory it seems wise to lean on more established theory building.

The L1 model that I build upon is a version of the interactive model, a so-called cross-talk model developed by Flores d'Arcais & Schreuder (1983).<sup>7</sup> Characteristic features of this model are: (1) that processing proceeds in parallel at all levels, and (2) that all levels communicate with each other directly. Such cross-talk between levels

differs from what was envisaged in the serial comprehension models according to which processing was either concept-driven, with information being passed from the top downwards (top-down processing) or data-driven (bottom-up processing). In relation to lexical inferencing, cross-talk means using cues from many different levels. My best informants are quite good at cross-talk in that an individual often proposes hypotheses about word meaning based now on this, now on that cue level.

For my particular purpose, cross-talk is defined as interaction between top-level and bottom-level cues, and I shall illustrate what this implies with the help of a text from a high-proficiency pair (Text 9.5):

*Text 9.5*

Test word: 'insatiable'

*Think-aloud*

A: able means being able to insane ins

B: I think it is a positive word something with extremely great

A: what does sati mean

B: satanic

B: there is also a negation it is something with in- they couldn't be calmed down

A: why do you think it is a negation?

B: it usually is with in- I mean the prefix

A: he sounds as if he is rather single-minded

A: in-sa-ti okay in- is something with

B: it is a negation it is something with u-

B: this is a good word oh by the way sati is related to satisfy

A: yes he has not yet been satisfied

(They agree on) not satisfied

In this text informants do what every foreign language teacher hopes they would do apart from a single misfire ('satanic'). They let top-level cues (e.g. from the context 'he sounds as if he is rather single-minded') interact with bottom cues (e.g. from the morphological level: 'in-' and '-able', from lexis plus semantics: 'satisfy'). This resembles what Flores d'Arcais & Schreuder (1983) refer to as parallel processing at various levels with direct communication between levels (in contrast to serial, unidirectional processing). A result of the cross-talk here is that bottom-level cues are integrated with top-level ones. 8 Such processing is

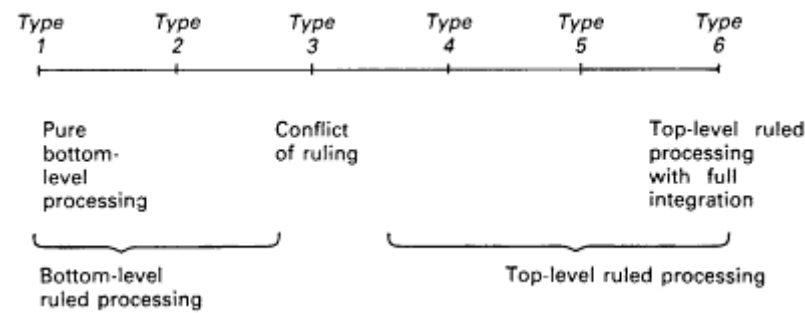


Figure 9.2  
The cross-talk continuum

called top-level ruled with full integration of linguistic cues. 9

However, from the earlier section on typical learner problems it appears that this is not what low-proficiency learners do when processing the test word 'insatiable'. I therefore propose that a model of L2 comprehension at word level must acknowledge interactive as well as non-interactive processing, the latter being a characteristic L2 feature, at least where beginning-to-intermediate learners are concerned.<sup>10</sup> For non-interactive processing informants use either top-level cues or bottom-level cues exclusively, that is there is no cross-talk between top and bottom levels. I envisage (Figure 9.2) two macro types of processing: one macro type being pure top processing and the other being processing on a cross-talk continuum.<sup>11</sup> Along the continuum we find six processing types, of which some have already been exemplified, viz. type 2, bottom-level ruled processing (Text 9.2), type 3, conflict of ruling (Text 9.4), and type 6, top-level ruled processing with full integration of linguistic cues (Text 9.5). (For a discussion of all six types see Haastrup, 1991).

On the left of the continuum, 'pure bottom-level processing' represents a type which involves one or more bottom levels only, whereas the far right is represented by a type which integrates bottom-level cues with top-level cues. The development along the continuum is towards the activation and utilisation of cues from more and more levels in other words increased cross-talk between levels. The second defining feature involves the potential for effective processing. The left part of the continuum comprises types that have a highly restricted potential for effective processing, whereas the right part comprises top-ruled processing exclusively. Top-ruled processing is effective processing in that informants always test bottom-level cues against the top.

### Learners' Procedural Knowledge in Comprehension

An analysis of lexical inferencing procedures has revealed that learners can make use of potential lexical knowledge: even though they have never heard or seen a word before, learners are able to guess the meaning of many such words in closely related languages such as Danish and English. However, they sometimes demonstrate lack of procedural knowledge in that they draw on irrelevant knowledge sources or combine cues from various linguistic levels in an unfortunate way. The result is that the guess is a vague approximation, is simply wrong or that learners give up.

A typical example of a wrong guess comes from attempts to interpret the test word 'affluence' in the following context:

In the rich world many diseases are caused by *affluence*.

Learners fail to activate context when they decide that 'affluence' means 'influenza', using as their cue the formal similarity between the test item and the Danish or English word 'influenza'. One feels tempted to remind the learners that they have to check the words at all levels, especially the top levels.

While many problems are shared by all learners, characteristic differences are also found between the high-proficiency and the low-proficiency learners. In relation to the cross-talk continuum (Figure 9.3), the low-proficiency group use the whole range, with a concentration on types 2-4. They occupy the middle of the continuum. In comparison, the high-proficiency learners make little use of the left part of the continuum whereas they intensify their use of top-level ruled processing (especially types 4 and 5).

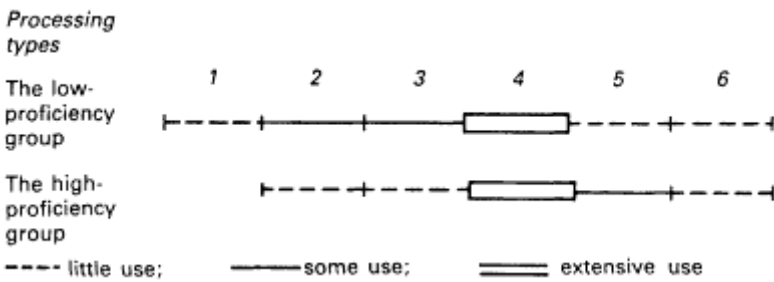


Figure 9.3  
The utilisation of the cross-talk continuum, by group

These results support one of the basic hypotheses of the study, namely that L2 proficiency is a decisive factor in lexical inferencing procedures. There seem to be a threshold level of L2 proficiency that learners have to reach before they are able to use effective inferencing procedures, and low-proficiency learners are far from this level. It was also assumed that inferencing procedures at text level, i.e. reading, and inferencing at word level are closely related, if not parallel processes. The study bears out that there is a positive correlation between lexical inferencing success (ability to guess the unknown word) and L1 reading comprehension for both proficiency groups. This correlation is much stronger for the high-proficiency than for the low-proficiency learners. One may speculate that successful readers are successful lexical inferencers because they use the same approach for both activities, namely interactive top-level ruled processing. Good readers may see lexical inferencing as a parallel process to reading inasmuch as they are both text interpretation exercises. In contrast, poor readers often use bottom-up procedures just as the less successful inferencers do. They may conceive of inferencing as a linguistic exercise rather than a text interpretation exercise.

The cross-sectional study has described the procedures used by two learner groups and found that there are characteristic differences. Only a longitudinal study can reveal whether the cross-talk continuum is also a developmental continuum, with learners following a route from bottom-level ruled to top-level ruled processing. As yet only a first tentative step has been taken towards a description of interlanguage comprehension procedures, which is long overdue.

#### Developing Learners' Procedural Knowledge

Assuming for a moment that there is a route that learners follow in their interlanguage development, what we can hope to do in foreign language teaching is to facilitate or speed up that process. Three factors are considered important in this respect: developing reading skills, letting learners negotiate meaning, and increasing learners' metacommunicative awareness about comprehension procedures. In relation to reading skills, it was suggested above that developing reading in L2 (and L1) may be as facilitating for lexical inferencing as developing general L2 proficiency. Good reading is what may push the learner particularly the high-proficiency one towards the right of the continuum. The second factor, negotiating meaning, is closely interwoven with the pair think-aloud. It has been argued (Haastrup, 1991) that it is time that we switched our focus from teacher talk to learner talk. When learners are given a chance



to negotiate meaning as they are in my study, it is predicted that their intake is superior to what is taken in when the teacher does all the work of explaining new words as is often the case in the traditional classroom. Related to this is my experience with the last factor, i.e. metacommunicative awareness. When I visited the classes that had participated in my study to give them feedback and teach them inferencing skills, I confronted them with excerpts from their own think-aloud protocols and discussed with them what were 'good' and 'bad' guesses. This increased their awareness of how the various processing types function as well as of which processing type is suitable for a particular item type. The success of this exercise makes me believe that consciousness-raising based on learners' own performance and experience is a fruitful way of developing procedural knowledge.

### Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to Eric Kellerman for comments on earlier drafts of this chapter as well as for stylistic improvements. His observations and questions have been highly stimulating.

### Notes

1. The low-proficiency group have received four to five years of English instruction, and the high-proficiency group six to seven years. The English proficiency of the two groups was tested and the difference was found to be statistically significant. Each group consists of 31 informant pairs.
2. This vagueness may be due to the fact that global comprehension models have to account for processing at many levels, typically both discourse and sentence. In connection with my way of distinguishing between top and bottom the separation of semantics and lexis remains a moot point.
3. 'Insatiable' is one out of 25 test items. These were selected through pre-testing so as to include words with and without linguistic cues. The criterion for referring words to the first category is that, in the pre-testing experiment, university students of English used linguistic cues when guessing the meaning of these words; for the test item 'insatiable', for instance, many of them used the prefix 'in-', the words 'satisfaction' and 'satisfy', and the suffix '-able'. The test item 'squalor' is an example of a word without linguistic cues.

The items with linguistic cues include some with intralingual cues (English), interlingual L1 cues (Danish) and interlingual cues from foreign languages other than English, notably German, French and Latin.

4. The reader who is struck by clumsy, unEnglish phrases in the protocols should remember that she is dealing with spontaneous speech. Moreover, in the translation no attempt has been made to make it more elegant. A word-by-word translation has been preferred as the protocols are intended to reflect the informants' train of thought.

5. Such additional questioning about words with linguistic cues turned out to be very useful for the analysis. It should be emphasised, though, that it came after the learners' discussion of all the 25 test items (think-aloud) and after the retrospection sessions. If it had come earlier, it might have interfered with the learners' spontaneous inferencing procedures.
6. My study is a comprehension study in the sense that the main inspiration comes from inferencing at utterance or text level. It has also a strong affinity to vocabulary acquisition studies, e.g. studies of word associations and communication strategies that focus on gaps in learners' target language vocabulary. I see my study in a double perspective as a study of inferencing at word level.
7. It may be considered problematic to use a model that is developed by researchers whose focus is on on-line comprehension of sentences. The inferencing data involve a considerable amount of reflection, which makes them different from the usually effortless comprehension of native speakers. However, as argued in the text, at present there is no alternative to borrowing a model from a related area. Comprehensive models such as that of van Dijk & Kintsch (1983) are biased towards discourse comprehension and pay little attention to processing at sentence level and below. The selected model by Flores d'Arcais & Schreuder (1983) is psycholinguistically oriented and specific, which makes it suitable for the present study.
8. It has been pointed out to me by Robert Phillipson that the term cross-talk may give rise to associations of 'angry talk' or 'talking at cross-purposes'. Although I acknowledge this risk, I keep the term coined by Flores d'Arcais & Schreuder (1983) partly in order to acknowledge my source of inspiration and partly because I appreciate the aspect of an active agent someone talking which is not evident in an alternative term like 'cross-level processing'.
9. A comment on pair data seems relevant here. It is assumed that pair procedures reflect individual procedures. I use pair data in the study since it is only with a partner that informants are stimulated to verbalise all their conscious thought processes because they need to explain and justify their hypotheses about word meaning. Some of my protocols (e.g. Text 9.5) contain traits that resemble what other researchers have described in terms of e.g. scaffolding (Færch, 1985). This is a drawback in relation to the basic assumption. The data, however, also lend support to the claim that pair procedures are of the same nature as individual procedures. A case in point is the processing type 'conflict of ruling' (see Figure 9.2). This was exemplified in Text 9.4 with the label referring to the fact that cues from top and bottom levels are perceived as being in conflict. Analyses of protocols indicate that one informant's internal conflict (as seen in Text 9.4) is of the same kind as a conflict between two informants.
10. It is tentatively proposed that the model for comprehension at word level is also valid for L2 comprehension at text level. L2 learners' bottom-up reading bears witness to the existence of non-interactive processing in L2 comprehension at text level (cf. Cziko, 1980).
11. The complete model of L2 comprehension at word level consists of two macro types of processing:  
Pure top processing  
Processing on the cross-talk continuum

Pure top processing was exemplified in Text 9.3

Within the limits of a short article I chose to focus on the cross-talk continuum. The rationale for distinguishing between the two macro types is to be found in Haastrup (1991).

12. L2 proficiency is here used as referring to declarative knowledge. This is motivated by the fact that most standardised proficiency tests stress this aspect.

#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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Susan M. Gass

## Introduction

The role of grammar instruction has been the subject of controversy within the recent history of language teaching. In many approaches to language teaching there is little room for explicit grammatical instruction (see for example, Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Yet many teachers continue to rely on explicit presentation of grammatical rules and many students continue to expect what Rutherford & Sharwood Smith (1988) call *L rules*, which in their terms are rule constructs 'devised by the formulator-as-linguist (professional or amateur, general or applied) and set down on paper' (Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1988: 2). What I will do in this paper is examine the learning correlates of this sort of instruction.

To begin, it serves us well to recall earlier conceptualisations of the role of grammar in language learning. Nearly a century ago, Sweet (1899), in his discussion of grammar, states that a grammar is something 'which is to be assimilated completely so that the learner at last practically knows it by heart' (Sweet, 1899: 137). As Corder (1973) points out, this is not to be interpreted in a behaviouristic light; rather, what Sweet intends is something akin to the present-day concept of 'rule internalisation'. This is seen particularly in Sweet's discussion of the difference between 'a grammar' and 'a reference grammar'. The reference grammar

will aim at being exhaustive wherever reasonable and practicable, and will perhaps give information on a variety of subjects which would be omitted altogether in the learner's grammar. Thus, it may give rules for the gender of nouns with almost exhaustive lists of

exceptions all of which would be superfluous to the ordinary student, *who learns his genders simply by associating each word with the definite article*. (Sweet, 1899: 137 my emphasis)

Thus, it is important to differentiate between the form and nature of grammatical rules as presented to learners and of those which learners internalise. As Corder (1973: 331) states:

. . . our pedagogical descriptions of the target language must be devised to help the learner learn whatever it is he learns but are not necessarily *what* he learns. Pedagogical descriptions are *aids* to learning, not the *object* of learning; so long as we keep that firmly in our minds we shall not get confused by the ambiguity of the expression 'teaching grammar'.

If it is the case that pedagogical descriptions serve the function of *aiding* the learner to internalise parts of the target language, but do not represent *what* the learner has internalised, then it becomes important to examine *how* explicit grammatical instruction might, in fact, *aid* the learner.

### Selective Attention

The role of selective attention has been discussed widely and incorporated into general models of learning. Osborne & Wittrock (1983), dealing with science learning, claim that

the stored memories and information processing strategies of the brain interact with the sensory information received from the environment to actively select and attend to the information and to actively construct meaning. (Osborne & Wittrock, 1983: 494).

Thus, a significant role is assigned to prior knowledge or experience as an activator of selective attention. With regard to second language learning, attention is what allows a learner to notice a mismatch between what she produces/knows and what is produced by speakers of the target language. Readjustment of one's grammar is triggered by the perceptibility of such a mismatch.

Boulouffe (1986), in a description of intake, discusses similar issues, at least in terms of mismatches. She claims that the gap between the learner's produced utterance and a target language utterance has to be *sufficiently narrow* for a mismatch to be perceptible. She cites the work of others in the field of education (Mason *et al.*, 1983) who argue that

the best challenges to students are provided by tasks which are just slightly ahead of them.

Considering the notion of selective attention, Osborne and Wittrock (1983) state:

the pathway to the construction of meaning from any experience does not begin with that experience. Rather it begins with *selective attention* to that experience, where selective attention is influenced by a variety of aspects of long term memory and cognitive processes. (Osborne & Wittrock, 1983: 494 my emphasis)

The concept of attention is not new in the second language literature. Hakuta (1976) notes that overtly marked forms in a language penetrate a learner's attention and are learned earlier than forms without overt marking. More recently, Nagle & Sanders (1986) discuss the essential role of attending in the process of comprehending. In their terms

attending involves the application of mental energy to processing tasks and may range from focussing on specific features of input to controlled processing for retrieval. (Nagle & Sanders, 1986: 17)

In the most extensive and eloquent treatment to date Schmidt (1990) takes a position similar to the one I have taken here, arguing that nothing in the target language is available for intake into a language learner's existing system unless it is consciously noticed. In his words, 'there is no such thing as learning a second language subliminally' (Schmidt, 1988: 60). He suggests that the evidence points strongly to the fact that not only is paying attention to language form facilitative, but that it may, in fact, be *necessary*, at least for adult second language learning.

The role of explicit attention to form and saliency has been dealt with empirically in recent work on second language acquisition. Hulstijn (1989) takes an experimental approach varying conditions in which there is meaning and/or form focus in attempt to determine the effect on learning. The results of his study provide evidence that explicit focus on linguistic form facilitates learning. He further claims that this is a sufficient condition for learning. Bardovi-Harlig (1987) uses the concept of salience to account for her results of the use of preposition stranding by non-native speakers, results which can otherwise not be accounted for within current models of second language acquisition. Finally, Ijaz (1986), using a prototype framework, claims that the transfer of noncentral meanings of lexical items (in her case prepositions) occurs when those meanings have been made 'linguistically salient', in other words when the learner is able to attend to them selectively.

What I am claiming is that selective attention is a major factor in second language development. 2 I have argued elsewhere (Gass, 1988a) that selective attention results in 'apperceived input'. It is what triggers the learner's noticing of a mismatch between the speech of native speakers of the target language and her own organisation of the target language, a first step in grammar restructuring (cf. McLaughlin (1990) for a discussion of restructuring).

What, then, is the role of explicit instruction and how does it relate to selective attention? It is my belief that explicit instruction facilitates student awareness of target language forms and/or meanings and of the discrepancies between what they have themselves constructed for their second language and the system which becomes apparent to them (through instruction) from the target language data they are confronted with. In other words, it acts as a selective attention device. As I mentioned above, before a change in one's grammar can come about there has to be an awareness that there are changes which *need* to be made. Grammar instruction in many cases may be what makes the learner initially aware of an aspect of her learner-language grammar which needs modification. In this view it aids the learner by focussing a learner's attention. Of course, it does not necessarily mean that an immediate change will result; it only means that it triggers the initial stages in what eventually results in grammar restructuring.

A similar role can be argued for 'error correction' or what is termed 'negative evidence' in language learning. It is well-established that as learners produce utterances in a second language, many 'errors' are made. What is of major interest is how learners recognise that an error is in fact an error, a necessary prerequisite for the eventual emergence of correct forms (see Gass, 1988a; Schmidt, 1990).

Theoretically, there are two kinds of evidence available to learners as they make hypotheses about correct and incorrect language forms: (1) positive evidence, and (2) negative evidence (Bowerman, 1987). Positive evidence comes from the speech they hear/read and is thus comprised of a limited set of well-formed utterances. Of the infinite number of possible sentences in a language, a learner hears only a subset. It has been claimed that there is no way for a learner to determine whether a given sentence is not heard because (a) it is not a possible sentence in that language, or (b) it is coincidentally not heard (Chomsky, 1981; Berwick, 1985; Pinker, 1984; 1987). It is in this sense that the sentences of a language which a learner hears (either a child first language learner or a second language learner) are referred to as the positive evidence on the basis of which



hypotheses are formed. On the other hand, negative evidence is comprised of information to a learner that his/her utterance is deviant *vis-à-vis* the norms of the language being learned. This can be in the form of an overt correction or an indirect indication of the deviance of an utterance (see Gass (1988b) and Gass & Varonis (1989) for a more detailed discussion of the role of negative evidence and of the function of explicit negotiation in the process of learning). In brief, error correction serves a similar function to grammar instruction in that it focusses a learner's attention on that part of her grammar which deviates from target language norms. This, as I have argued above, is a first step in the modification of one's grammar.

Sharwood Smith (1981) and Rutherford & Sharwood Smith (1985) similarly argue for the role of linguistic consciousness-raising. The object of instruction in their view is self-discovery on the part of the learner. Thus the role of the classroom is to aid the learner in making efficient use of the resources at hand to facilitate self-discovery. 3 Sharwood Smith (1980) [cited in Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1985: 275] proposes the following:

#### Pedagogical Grammar Hypothesis

Instructional strategies which draw the attention of the learner to specifically structural regularities of the language, as distinct from the message content, will under certain conditions significantly increase the rate of acquisition over and above the rate expected from learners acquiring that language under natural circumstances where attention to form may be minimal and sporadic.

Unfortunately, Rutherford & Sharwood Smith do not provide any data to substantiate the claim, a claim whose verification would clearly involve comparisons between tutored and untutored learners. Three recent studies, however, do provide evidence of the effect of explicit instruction on learning, in particular by showing how 'natural' language development can be 'short-circuited' by capitalising on learners' abilities to generalise. All deal with the acquisition of relative clauses.

#### Relative Clause Acquisition

Relative clauses in the world's languages can be ordered into an implicational hierarchy such that in a given language one relative clause type implies the presence of another. The hierarchy, known as the Accessibility Hierarchy, and elaborated on by Keenan & Comrie (1977), is given below.

## Accessibility Hierarchy

SUBJ > DIR OBJ > INDIR OBJ > OPREP > GEN > OCOMP 4

What is implied by this hierarchy is that for any given language, if it has a relative clause at the lower end of the hierarchy (e.g. GEN), then it also has all relative clause types higher up (or to the left). A number of studies have shown that second language learners tend to learn relative clauses in the order from high on the hierarchy to low on the hierarchy (e.g. Gass, 1979a; Hyldenstam, 1984). Two recent studies (Gass, 1982; Eckman, Bell & Nelson, 1988) investigated the role of explicit grammatical instruction on learners' abilities to generalise from that instruction. Both of these studies show that when learners were instructed on the relative clause positions lower down the hierarchy, they were able to generalise to the higher positions. Generalisation from the higher positions to the lower ones did not occur.

Pavesi (1986) suggested that learners of English in a naturalistic environment only learned some of the relative clause positions (SUBJ, DIR OBJ, INDIR OBJ) whereas tutored learners learned all types. She argues that it is not so much instruction which makes a difference, but the quality of exposure. However, it appears that at least for OCOMP relatives, there is very little input (see Keenan, 1975) and for some speakers of English these sentences are even ungrammatical. In cases such as these where few tokens exist, grammatical instruction provides the only means of input.

This is not to say that explicit instruction is essential. A learner can presumably figure out the information herself. After all, we have done this as native speakers of a language and many second language learners are able to do this. Rather, focussed instruction provides a shortcut. An important difference between child language acquisition and second language acquisition is that in second language acquisition, the learner already has a grammar of a language at her disposal. If we assume that the first language grammar forms a major organising basis of second language development (cf. Kellerman, 1979; 1987; and the papers in Gass & Selinker, 1983), then we can immediately see that external intervention may be essential in learners' organisation of L2 information. Certain generalisations may be 'blocked' by the organisation of the native language (cf. White, 1987a).

## Conclusion

What I have argued above requires a slightly different view of the role of grammar instruction, and, by extension, different procedures for evaluation of classroom success. The traditional standpoint is that grammar instruction provides learners with specific information about correct target language forms and by implication leads to internalisation of those rules and thus to greater communicative ability. In their attempt to focus on authentic, communicative language, more recent language teaching methodologies have de-emphasised the role of grammar instruction since it is not part of 'authentic' language nor is there a direct relationship between grammar instruction and communicative ability. I believe that we can interpret instruction as having provided a means of alerting learners of the mismatch between their learner-language form and the target language form by focussing attention on those specific forms. Hence, the goal of explicit grammar instruction should not necessarily be accuracy. Rather, a more realistic, if very different goal, albeit one difficult to assess, would be to highlight specific parts of a learner's grammar which do not coincide with target language norms and would thus act as a trigger for future change. It is the *means* by which change is triggered; it is not the *end*.

## Notes

1. I would like to thank Eric Kellerman for helpful comments on an earlier draft. I alone am responsible for all errors that remain.
2. In Gass (1988a) I discussed other factors which may also be involved in selectively attending.
3. It is important to note that in focussing on grammar instruction, there are a large number of possibilities ranging from traditional explanations using metalinguistic terms to more implicit methodologies designed for structural focus within a communicative context. It does not mean that learners have to be able to explicitly state rules; it does mean that the teacher/textbook is attempting to focus a learner's attention on certain structural properties of the second language. Practice then serves the function of automatising the particular structural properties brought into focus.
4. SUBJ = subject
  - DIR OBJ = direct object
  - INDIR OBJ = indirect object
  - OPREP = object of preposition
  - GEN = genitive
  - OCOMP = object of comparative

Examples of these relative clause types are:

*Subject*

I saw the boy *who* is 6 feet tall.

*Direct object*

I saw the boy *whom* you know.

*Indirect object*

I saw the girl to *whom* you gave the book.

*Object of preposition*

I can see the table under *which* you put the book.

*Genitive*

That's the woman *whose* sister is an actress.

*Object of comparative*

That's the man *whom* I am taller than.

*References*

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

11

Compensatory Strategies in Second Language Research:  
A Critique, a Revision, and Some (Non-)Implications for the Classroom

Eric Kellerman

Here, by way of introduction to this chapter, is a quotation from a book by Nigel Barley called *The Innocent Anthropologist*. Barley is writing about an incident that occurred during the time he was doing fieldwork amongst the Dowayo people of the Cameroons:

Shrieking in a most unmanly fashion, I retreated through the door where stood a Dowayo waif of about six who looked at me quizzically. Stress had somewhat disrupted my lexicon, and I could not find the word for 'scorpion'. 'There are hot beasts within!', I cried in an Old Testament voice. The child peered inside and with an expression of profound disdain, stamped the scorpions to death with his bare feet. (Barley, 1986: 134)

Barley's failure to retrieve the Dowayo word for 'scorpion' and his *ad hoc* solution in that same language focus precisely on the topic of this chapter, a discussion of those principally verbal tokens of learners' improvisatory skills known as *communication strategies*. These have over the years received a considerable measure of attention in the literature, and one thinks particularly of the research undertaken by Elaine Tarone, Ellen Bialystok, Claus Færch and Gabi Kasper, who between them have

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lifted the study of communication strategies out of the realms of merely interesting observation to give it scientific respectability.

In Færch & Kasper's (1983) taxonomy of strategies, Nigel Barley's 'hot beasts' would be a token of a subset of communication strategy types known as *compensatory strategies*, since these are used to maintain the integrity of the learner's original communicative goal. Specifically they are *lexical* compensatory strategies, since they replace missing lexical items.

Although lexical compensatory strategies are not the only sort of communication strategy that has been identified (there are for instance what are known as *reduction strategies* and strategies designed to deal with non-lexical, i.e. phonological or syntactic, problems), I shall be principally concerned with lexical strategies, (a) because they have incidentally been given the most attention in the literature, (b) because of the obviously central role played by lexis in any developing linguistic system, (c) because learners seem more able to reflect on lexical difficulties than those involving other types of linguistic element, and (d) because they have been the focus of the research that Theo Bongaerts, Nanda Poulisse and myself have been engaged in at Nijmegen University. In addition, I shall also be concentrating on referential communication because of the critical role lexis plays in it.

I intend to offer criticisms of three aspects of recent research into compensatory strategies. The first criticism concerns the means by which *taxonomies of strategic behaviour* are established. It is a reasonable demand that a taxonomy of putative strategy types should be set up with regard to explicit, consistent and discrete criteria. Yet strategies have generally been classified by researchers on the basis of variable and conflicting criteria, leading to unnecessarily complex and potentially open-ended taxonomies whose psychological status is therefore dubious. Despite these problems, I shall argue that it is in actual fact quite possible to create a taxonomy of compensatory strategies which is not subject to these strictures, in that it is parsimonious, finite and psychologically plausible.

The second criticism concerns the relationship between compensatory strategies and certain kinds of first language behaviour. There seems to be an assumption in some quarters, despite public avowals to the contrary, that compensatory strategies typify second language behaviour. This probably comes about because such behaviour is implicitly compared to what a native speaker would have done in the same circumstances. In this chapter, it will be shown that while such strategies are indeed

characteristic of L2 behaviour, native speakers make more widespread use of them and related strategies than has generally been acknowledged in the second language literature. This being the case, it is necessary to embed research on compensatory strategies into a more general framework of referential communication, that is, one which addresses itself to the question of how learners' communication strategies relate to the ordinary communicative activities of adult native speakers and young children.

The third criticism relates to the previous one and concerns the extrapolation from recent research on strategies to classroom practice. If one does indeed go along with the assumption that compensatory strategies are typically forms of *second* language behaviour, then it may be argued that explicit teaching of or about strategies will make learners better strategy users, in that attention may be drawn to those types of strategies which are most effective in achieving communicative ends. The acquisition of strategies will then be seen as akin to the acquisition of any other second language skill.

However, if it can be shown that such strategies are part and parcel of normal native speaker communicative life, then they already constitute a ready-made resource to be exploited in the second language. If learners seem unable to make full use of this resource (and as we shall see, this is debatable) then we must look to other causes, such as a lack of linguistic ability in the second language or to factors inherent to classroom settings.

#### Criticism No. 1:

##### The Trouble with Taxonomies

The most common approach to studying compensatory strategies is to develop descriptive taxonomies of learners' strategic behaviour. That is to say, utterances are first identified as evidencing attempts by the learner to compensate for a lack of linguistic knowledge. They are subsequently classified according to some principle of abstract characterisation into various strategy types.

Now what do we want our taxonomy to be and what do we want it to do for us? This is a question of critical importance in the study of compensatory strategies. It may be that a taxonomy of strategies based purely on an analysis of linguistic structure would be quite satisfactory as far as a linguist was concerned. <sup>1</sup> But for the researcher interested in the way second languages are acquired and used, or for a teacher-trainer interested in potential classroom applications, a more obvious concern would be with the psychological processes underlying those strategies.



The principal question then becomes 'What is the relationship between a taxonomy of strategies and the psychological processes it presupposes?' (cf. Ammerlaan, 1984).

For one thing, we have to be careful not to assume that by providing abstract characterisations of learner behaviour, we have then addressed the question of psychological plausibility. Dulay & Burt (1972) made this point most cogently 15 or so years ago in their insistence that we make a clear distinction between product and process when it came to assessing the role of the L1 in SLA. In the present case this means that if, for instance, it can be shown that a range of supposedly discrete strategies were actually underpinned by one and the same psychological process, then a taxonomy which insisted on the differentiation of these strategies would seriously vitiate our understanding of how language is used (Bialystok & Kellerman, 1987).

Given, then, an avowed interest in understanding the processes underlying strategy use in second language learners, it seems eminently reasonable to impose a number of conditions on a taxonomy of compensatory strategies. I would like to suggest three such conditions (cf. Bialystok & Kellerman, 1987):

The first has already been alluded to. It is that whatever strategies we suppose, they should be *psychologically plausible* that is, they should be compatible with what we know about language production, cognitive processing and problem-solving behaviour.

The second is *parsimony*. Given a choice between two descriptively adequate frameworks, we should always prefer the one that posits the fewer strategy types, provided these are consistent with the data. If we wish to explain compensatory strategies on the basis of underlying mechanisms, the smaller the number of such mechanisms the better.

The third is that a taxonomy should be *generalisable* across tasks, items, languages and learners. Although particular tasks and items will imply different goals, perhaps resulting in different distributions of strategies, no strategies should be uniquely associated with certain tasks or certain items. Whatever the strategies, they should always be drawn from the same pool. Similarly, a taxonomy should not be sensitive to learners' L1 backgrounds nor the L2 being learned, nor to whether that learning takes place in the classroom or out of it.

Taxonomies of strategies, of which there are several in the literature, are usually based on the roughly comparable taxonomies set up by Tarone (e.g. 1981) and Færch & Kasper (e.g. 1983). They usually share a common

core of strategies, plus a variable number of ones less frequently reported. Researchers and students who come fresh to the subject and begin reading all the relevant publications will soon find themselves tramping about in a luxuriant jungle of names and strategies. In fact the jungle metaphor is particularly appropriate here, since there is a strong element of botanising in the way that heretofore 'undiscovered' strategies go on being added to taxonomies. To illustrate the point, in our initial survey of the literature at Nijmegen (Poulisse, Bongaerts & Kellerman, 1984), we found about 50 different labels for strategies in circulation, though some of these were just synonyms or near-synonyms for each other. As Færch (1984) pointed out, the danger is that the profusion of strategy names, variation in the tasks used, and the lack of clear definitions will make comparison of one piece of research with another a delicate affair.

I want to look in detail now at some of the strategies that have been proposed in these taxonomies (see also Kellerman, Bongaerts & Poulisse, 1987; Poulisse, 1987):

In her classification of 1983, Tarone includes two strategies called Word Coinage and Circumlocution. Word Coinage is defined as follows:

The speaker makes up a new word in order to communicate a desired concept . . . (Tarone, 1983: 62)

while Circumlocution is defined like this:

The learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action . . . (Tarone, 1983: 62)

Let us see where these definitions lead us. If learner A, thinking of the building Anglophone native speakers would label 'an art gallery', refers to it as 'a picture-place' (an example I owe to Ellis, 1985), then according to Tarone's definition, this utterance would have to be classified as a Word Coinage, since it is a 'new word'. But what if learner B refers to an ART GALLERY 2 as 'a place where you look at pictures'? In this case we would have to classify the utterance as a Circumlocution, since it is the characteristics of the building that are being described. But what then is 'picture-place' but a description of 'the characteristics . . . of the object'? The difference lies only in the fact that 'picture-place' is realised, not by a Noun Phrase + Postmodification, but by the grammatical device known as compounding.

Similarly, if learner A begins by called a TRIANGLE 'a figure' which has three corners', while learner 13 calls it 'a three-corner', then by the same token the first utterance will again have to be called a Circumlocution and the second a Word Coinage. Thus a classification scheme of this kind

would list 'a place where you look at pictures' and 'a thing which has three corners' under one heading (Circumlocution), and 'picture-place' and 'three-corner' under another (Word Coinage). This classification system is insensitive to the fact that 'a thing which has three corners' and 'a three-corner' on the one hand, and 'a place where you look at pictures' and 'a picture-place' on the other refer to the respective sets of characteristics of TRIANGLE and ART GALLERY and therefore are all technically Circumlocutions. The difference in linguistic realisation may be interesting in its own right, but it constitutes a separate issue which does not contribute to our understanding of the prelinguistic processing underlying these compensatory strategies. Here then is one case where it seems justified to argue that one cognitive process underlies two putatively discrete strategies.

A further problem with current taxonomies of strategies is that there is a tendency to confound the compensatory strategy with the properties of the referent. That is to say, an implicit assumption is made that learners have available highly specialised processes which in some obscure fashion are tailored to select specific properties of the referent independently of whatever properties the referent itself may actually have. Some taxonomies have archistrategies called variously Circumlocution or Description, and then go on to divide them into strategies determined by what kind of properties of the referent the learner actually mentions. In these taxonomies, such properties are critical in distinguishing one subcategory of strategy from another.

But there is very little point in incorporating such detailed characterisations into a taxonomy. Doing so can have no bearing on our understanding of the relevant processing mechanisms. One study, for instance, reports that subjects made the most use of the Description of Function strategy (i.e. a specification of what a thing is used for) when they did not know the appropriate word in their L2 (Bialystok, 1983). However, the L2 targets all happened to be household implements like BELLOWS, CLOCKS, SHOVELS, STOOLS and TONGS, and since the distinguishing property of most common man-made objects is their function, this is exactly the result one would expect.

Now, had one of the L2 targets been a STARFISH, subjects would have had a hard time concocting some salient function for it. Biologists might talk about its position in the food chain, perhaps, but if we did not know what to call the creature in the L2, most of us would be more likely to refer to its shape and its habitat, and perhaps its colour. So a conscientious traditional taxonomy would then set about classifying such

utterances in terms of strategies called variously Descriptions of Physical Properties, Location, Colour, and so on. What is lost in this sort of detailed classification is the fact that the apparent differences in the strategies used to describe BELLOWS and STARFISH, far from suggesting different processes, do no more than reflect the obvious differences that exist between the referents themselves.

In the absence of the appropriate lexical item, an analysis of the salient properties of concrete referents like these does not seem to make excessive cognitive demands of the learner. However, this is by no means always the case, and because it is not, some researchers fall into the trap of discovering more strategies as a result. Paribakht (1985), for instance, identifies two new strategies she terms Contextual and Conceptual Approaches. These were deemed necessary to cope with the way learners of English dealt with abstract concepts, where the standard taxonomies with strategies like those I have described above were considered insufficient. And indeed notions like LOVE or JUSTICE do not lend themselves to convenient componential analysis. Because they are conceptually complex, very different types of information are required if the lexical item labelling the concept is not available. So Paribakht found that, in the case of these abstract concepts, learners made more use of contextual support and knowledge of the world than they did with concrete objects, where descriptions of constituent properties were more often used. But again the same objection must be raised. We do not need to posit the existence of different strategies just because we verbalise about the concept in different ways. It is our mental representation of the concept itself that will minimally determine what properties will be selected by the strategy and not the other way around. We all know that creating strict definitions of abstract concepts can be hard, but that is not the point at issue.

Fortunately, in everyday communication, there is no obligation for speakers to be definitional in the dictionary sense. One's mental representation of LOVE, for instance, is much more likely to be organised schematically and to contain communicatively useful if episodic information like 'It's what Jack Nicholson finally didn't feel for Shirley MacLaine in *Terms of Endearment*' Paribakht's Contextual Approach in a nutshell, if your interlocutor has seen the film.

My last point in this section concerns the category known as Mime. This is always listed as a separate category in traditional taxonomies. Again, I doubt that it is necessary to posit a separate strategy of this type. The use of a different, non-verbal, mode of expression does not

entail that the learner cannot find ways to communicate properties of the referent.

Consider this example from the Nijmegen corpus. A learner wanted to indicate that she played the flute. The problem for her was that in Dutch both the flute and the recorder are classified as types of flute (*fluit*). The first is called a *dwarsfluit* ('transverse flute') and the other a *blokfluit* ('block flute'). The learner knew the word 'flute' in English but was now left with the problem of deciding how to distinguish between the two of them. So she said 'I play the flute, not this one,' (making gesture of playing instrument in front of her mouth) 'but this one' (making gesture of playing instrument to the side of her mouth). The gestures were iconic and immediately understandable; she selected what were, given the setting, the optimally *distinguishing* properties of recorders and flutes. An alternative might have been for her to describe the instruments or their playing positions verbally (or perhaps to name a leading exponent), but the difference between the verbal or non-verbal behaviour is not one of an underlyingly different process at all; it is one of encoding medium some things are more easily mimed than articulated, and not only by learners. 3 I return to this point below.

Dissatisfaction with the criteria by which some of the above strategies are defined suggests that a revised approach is necessary. The Nijmegen group's fundamental claim here is that in those cases where a learner resorts to compensatory strategies, there are really only two options that constitute any real difference in the processing that underlies the resultant linguistic utterance. So as to come as close as possible to expressing their original intention, learners can either manipulate the concept so that it becomes expressible through their available linguistic (or mimetic) resources, or they can manipulate encoding media. It is my contention, then, that the strategic behaviour of learners can be described in terms of two processes only *conceptual* and *code*.<sup>4</sup>

When a learner uses the conceptual strategy, two recognisable and compatible approaches are evident. The first is to name some substitute referent with which the target referent implicitly shares properties or which forms part of the same category hierarchy. This approach we have called *holistic*. Examples of holistic conceptual strategies would be the use of 'bird' for SPARROW, 'vegetables' for PEAS, or 'cooker' for MICROWAVE OVEN. There is often a linguistic hedge preceding the use of the strategy like 'It looks like a . . .', 'It's a sort of . . .', which signifies both the presence of substitution and category membership.

The second approach is to select and articulate particular properties

of the intended referent itself. This approach we call *analytic*. As we saw in the LOVE example above, these properties need not be definitional in the dictionary sense. Examples of analytic conceptual strategies would be 'This you use for a baby so it can't make its clothes dirty' for BIB, 'haircutter' for HAIRDRESSER or 'hot beast' for SCORPION.

What properties are selected in the case of analytic conceptual strategies depends on the nature of the referent, the purpose of the communicative act, and the nature of the communicative setting. The only further restriction is that the properties selected be encodable by the speaker in some form.

The principal difference between the holistic and analytic approaches is that in the first case the use of a substitute referent may require the listener to distill the relevant properties from that substitute and to transfer them to the intended referent; 5 in the case of the analytic approach, the listener is obliged to reconstruct the intended referent from the given properties. But it is frequently the case that the two approaches are combined, as in 'it's a sort of large chicken you eat at Thanksgiving' for TURKEY.

If we accept the arguments in favour of the conceptual strategy, we can immediately do away with a whole range of strategies which have appeared in a number of taxonomies, since (semantically motivated) Word Coinages, Circumlocutions, the various types of Descriptions of Properties, Approximations, Contextual and Conceptual Approaches and so on all appear to be manifestations of a single process, the manipulation of the concept that is being referred to. Furthermore, this sweeping away of strategy types means that previous claims that the choice of strategies is item-dependent becomes contentless.

The *code strategy* also provides an alternative means of labelling the target referent, but without involving representation at the conceptual level. It does this in two fundamental ways. The first is to resort either to another language (the L1 typically, but not inevitably), or to productive grammatical processes within the L2 (like morphological derivation) to create *ad hoc* labels in the L2. Traditional categories like Borrowing and Foreignising, and grammatically motivated forms of Word Coinage fall under this heading.<sup>6</sup>

The second way is to resort to non-verbal means such as ostension (perhaps coupled with 'pragmatic anaphors' like 'this' and 'that' see Hankamer & Sag (1976) for discussion), onomatopoeic devices and perhaps even pictorial representation. When the *code strategy* is used, no attempt is made by the speaker to substitute another referent, nor to



represent conceptual properties of the target referent. Examples would be 'pruke' (WIG), from an anglicised Dutch *pruik*, and 'to ironise' (TO IRON). It should be noted at this point that an iconic mime sequence like that cited above for FLUTE in fact combines both conceptual and code strategies simultaneously (though in processing terms the learner must have begun with conceptual analysis), in that the learner not only selects certain properties of the referent but expresses them by adopting an alternative encoding medium to the L2. We may then say that the latter strategy is 'embedded' in the former, thus recognising that the resultant mimetic gesture is in fact a composite of the conceptual and code strategies. Here, incidentally, is a case where a traditional taxonomy would posit one strategy (typically 'Mime') and where we would posit two (conceptual and code). Similarly, if the learner had chosen to *verbalise* the difference between FLUTE and RECORDER, but did so partially or entirely in the L1, we would still be dealing with an example where a code strategy would be seen as embedded within a conceptual strategy.

The conceptual strategy/code strategy distinction can be seen as relevant to two hierarchically organised levels of processing. A strategy may operate at the level of conceptual organisation (i.e. analytic/holistic), leading to a pre-verbal message that then needs to be encoded. If the L2 code remains defective, the strategy may then be to resort to some other code. However, a code strategy can be brought into operation independently of whatever might or might not go on at the conceptual level. Put another way, a code strategy leads to the substitution of an *ad hoc* label for the one the learner does not have available in the L2. Thus if some behaviour were to be described as Mime and another as Ostension, only in the first case will we suppose that a strategy has operated at the conceptual level; in the second case, the conceptual level will not have been involved. Yet, at the encoding level, the choice of non-verbal means of expression is the outcome of a code strategy. 7

The two-strategy taxonomy seems to meet the requirements it was earlier claimed that a taxonomy of strategies should meet. It does not confound putative processes with grammatical structures, with inherent or incidental properties of the referent, or with the encoding medium. Practical experience tells us that it does not appear to be task-, item-, language- or learner-dependent. In other words, it is generalisable (see Poulish, 1989). And it could hardly be more parsimonious and finite than it is now.

As to the question of psychological plausibility, the positing of two quite distinct processes, one operating on the level of conceptual



representation and the other on the level of formal representation, would seem to meet that condition. Many models of language processing propose distinct conceptual and linguistic knowledge components (e.g. Levelt, 1989). The question of non-verbal encoding is more difficult to deal with. However, at least one researcher (McNeill, e.g. 1985) has maintained that gesture and linguistic utterance are generated from the same cognitive base. Furthermore, Bialystok's distinction between knowledge and control in language processing (e.g. Bialystok & Sharwood Smith, 1985) provides some valuable insights into the question of what factors affect learners' decisions as to which strategy type to use at a given moment. We can begin to understand how the relative distributions of conceptual and code strategies vary according to the communicative task learners are engaged in. In Bialystok's framework, conceptual strategies will *tend* to be knowledge-based, and code strategies will *tend* to be control-based. One would therefore predict that the greater the attentional demands placed on the learner, the larger the number of code strategies' Used by learners to cope with limited processing capacities. 8

#### Criticism No. 2:

##### The Non-Uniqueness of Compensatory Strategies

I turn now to my second point, that research into compensatory strategies has typically been concerned only with the phenomenon as it applies to second language learners and has thus failed to embed itself in a more general framework of communication. In other words, even if lip service has been paid to the idea that such strategies may be used by native speakers, the circumstances under which this happens have not been properly explored (except by Bialystok, 1984). Most writers merely state that even native speakers have to build communicative bridges from time to time to make up for an occasional linguistic deficit; for instance, Ellis (1985: 182) suggests that taxonomies of strategies apply equally well to native speakers and L2 learners.

The failure to explore properly the relationship between first and second language behaviour may have to do with the fact that L2 compensatory strategies are seen by the world at large as 'first aid kits' which learners use when they are in trouble linguistically speaking, and their patched-up attempts to communicate therefore look so unlike what native speakers would do in the same circumstances that, even though they may be grammatically immaculate, the strategies will be pragmatically odd (cf. Wagner, 1983). The consequence is (and I am being speculative here) that implicit native speaker norms are established against which

the learner's utterances are evaluated. This leads to what Bley-Vromen (1983) has called the *comparative fallacy*, since we should not be comparing learners' strategies with the comparable native speaker norm, but learners' strategies with native speakers' strategies. If we do so, we will see that there is nothing unique that attaches to the former; in fact they are just a highly visible subset of a range of behaviours representative of referential communication in general.

Indeed a little thought will show that such behaviour is surprisingly commonplace amongst native speakers. It is not just that Nigel Barley's SCORPIONS could wriggle away from us temporarily in either first *or* second language. There are many other common-or-garden cases. Take a situation where one member of a pair of speakers is an expert and the other a novice and the novice needs to have some term explained or to find out what something is called (cf. Isaacs & Clark, 1987). Obvious examples of such situations would be those prevailing between caregivers and children, doctors and patients, teachers and students, local residents and tourists ('It's two blocks north of Bloomingdale's' 'Bloomingdale's?' 'Yes, you can't miss it it's the big store on the corner of 59th and 3rd Streets'). The relationship between dictionaries and their users also springs to mind. Morphological creativity is commonplace in informal language use ('She porsched her way down the freeway'). And, as Carroll (1983) points out, companies select trade names that are often highly descriptive of the products they designate, e.g. 'Kookmaster' for a kitchen stove, 'Vacuvin' for a device that removes some of the air from open bottles of wine, then seals them. Some TV games those where you have to guess the word on your partner's card under time pressure, or where adults have to guess what children are talking about from their childlike descriptions also fall under this heading. Finally, there are the pathological word-finding conditions like aphasic anomia to consider alongside ordinary everyday memory lapses and retrieval problems.

In all these cases, a name for a particular something cannot be retrieved, or must be withheld (as in a quiz game), or is not understood, or does not even exist (as in the creation of a trade name). It matters little whether it is the speaker or the listener who initiates the compensatory behaviour, or whether it is an activity that happens over several conversational turns or a single one. The motivation for the behaviour will differ from situation to situation, as the above list suggests, but the parallels with learners' strategies seem quite clear: in all these cases, there is a need to make up for someone's (temporary) knowledge deficit.

And there are other, similar, behaviours where one would not

necessarily want to talk about compensation, but which clearly have much in common with compensatory strategies. I am thinking of the ways in which speakers instinctively know how to select one particular referent out of an array of potentially competing referents. In such situations it may be impossible to use the referent's conventional name alone as this will not be distinctive. Instead, selection will be based on the referent's unique setting-dependent attributes ('the small white figure on the left') rather than simply 'the circle'.<sup>9</sup> A second circumstance where this sort of referential behaviour is very common is in the elegant variation of formal writing. Here the dictates of style proscribe ugly repetition of structures ('The Scots are confident of victory against the Auld Enemy in this afternoon's international at Hampden Park. In fact, North of the Border they're saying the English are in for a terrible drubbing.'). In similar vein, Bialystok (1990:130) points out that J. Alfred Prufrock's expression of self-disgust in 'I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas', 'not only mark(s) the difference between ordinary conversation and poetry, but also between mundane poetry and the exalted heights reached by T.S. Eliot'.

Seen in this light, the fundamental difference between a native speaker's and an adult learner's referential behaviour is that the former has a more extensive set of linguistic means available for reaching a particular communicative goal. Accordingly, native speakers also have much more flexibility than learners in their use of referential strategies. Learners may therefore have to select less favoured options, but this does not in itself imply any qualitative differences in the way the situational constraints are taken into account, nor in the way the available options are selected in so far as they can be realised linguistically (cf. Bialystok, 1984). It is self-evident that learners operate with a relatively reduced linguistic competence, but it is a competence that in no way undercuts their fully-developed ability to refer or understand reference. Learners' compensatory strategies are thus governed by the same principles that guide all referential communication, even if learners conceive of their strategies as 'second best'.<sup>10</sup>

What linguistic form the referential expression ultimately takes (e.g. a name or a complex noun phrase) will thus be very largely determined by the speaker's goal and the need to satisfy the usual constraints and obligations present in the communicative setting (e.g. the Co-operative Principle), in addition to linguistic knowledge. This being the case, the referring expression may consist of a description of quite evanescent setting-dependent properties that *in no sense* define the referent. (See also Pechmann (1989) on the problem of referential overspecification.)

It has been argued above that learners' compensatory strategies have their analogues in several forms of referential communication in the L1, and that therefore there is no justification for treating them even implicitly as if they were a uniquely second-language phenomenon in processing terms. Furthermore, Bialystok (1984) argues that attempts to define compensatory strategies (whether in L1 or L2) in terms of the potential presence of conscious awareness of a problem to be solved (e.g. Færch & Kasper, 1983) may artificially distinguish between processes where there is no metacognitive awareness and those where there is. For one thing, adult native speakers usually perform acts of reference without difficulty. For another, young children who have yet to develop metacognitive skills have been considered to use compensatory strategies in their metaphorical extensions of words like 'doggie' to other small domestic quadrupeds (i.e. a CAT is *like* a doggie, rather than an actual doggie) or in the creation of new forms like 'plantman' for the adult 'gardener'. It is unlikely that children are conscious of their linguistic problems. Within the framework proposed in this chapter, it would be better to see consciousness and problematization as epiphenomena, serendipitous by-products of the adult use of compensatory strategies-serendipitous in the sense that they provide researchers with a window through which to study the phenomenon at issue. (See e.g. Poulish, Bongaerts & Kellerman, 1987.)

### Criticism No. 3: Implications for the Classroom

In the previous section it was argued that learners' compensatory strategies should be seen as a subset of types of referential behaviour found among both first and second language users. In this section it will be maintained that once the broader view is taken, arguments for the implementation of pedagogical programmes designed to teach compensatory strategies become harder to justify.

While, at first sight, it seems logical to expect learners to be able to make use of the strategic competence they have built up in their first language when operating in a second, some researchers have revealed an ambivalent attitude towards that notion when it comes to considering the pedagogical implications of research into compensatory strategies. That is to say, they may respect the logic, yet claim either that strategies should still be taught to learners (e.g. Willems, 1987), or, that despite the logic, strategic competence would appear not to be fully available in the L2 (e.g. Færch & Kasper, 1986). Either position suggests that the learner would be a better strategy user with specific training. If we accept

this premise, the question is whether it is conceivable that learners, by virtue of their operating in another code, suffer from a sort of cognitive deficit akin to the syntactic, lexical and phonological deficits which define their learner status. Or whether it is the case that we are in fact failing to recognise the influence of some important extraneous factor which helps to create the impression that learners do not fully utilise their strategic competence. A possible candidate would be the inhibitory nature of the typical classroom setting with its emphasis on grammatical correctness.

Now, proponents of any form of training in compensatory strategy use in the classroom would have to offer evidence that there was an important difference between native and non-native strategic competence in terms of the types of compensatory strategy used or in terms of the distribution of those types. Alternatively, they would have to show that there was a significant developmental dimension to L2 strategic competence in the sense that more proficient learners should be qualitatively different users of compensatory strategies from their less proficient peers.

But as Færch & Kasper (1986) point out, studies comparing strategic competence in L1 and L2 have been thin on the ground. To rectify this situation, and in order to address the whole question of the need for explicit compensatory strategy training, a series of studies was undertaken at Nijmegen which attempted to answer the question as to whether there are indeed qualitative differences between native speakers and learners on the one hand, and between learners at different proficiency levels on the other. If such differences could be detected, then the strategy teaching lobby would be vindicated. However, it would not be vindicated if it could be shown that any differences between populations are just due to relative levels of linguistic (specifically lexical) knowledge and do not represent differences in the ability to use strategies *per se*.

The first problem is to find an appropriate set of tasks. After all, what sort of task would it be which posed identical lexical difficulties for native and non-native alike? Our solution has been two-fold: (1) to use referential communication tasks which create artificial lexical gaps for both native and non-native speakers, and (2) so as to ensure that task complexity does not act as a confounding variable, to use learners as their own native-speaker controls wherever possible. There is a long tradition of referential communication studies, particularly with regard to the referential skills of children. The typical task requires subjects to refer to novel abstract shapes 'which by definition do not have names.

Tasks like these are useful, as Dickson (1982) points out, because it is possible to control communicative intent, as both task and referent are imposed on the speaker. In interactive versions of these tasks, where the listener is required to make an overt response, we can also check whether the speaker has been correctly understood. In addition to permitting comparison of native speaker and learner performance, referential communication tasks also allow one to examine the performance of various proficiency groups. Furthermore, in order to vary the selection of tasks we have also used tasks like Object Naming, Story Retelling, and Interviews, which also permit comparison among learners of differing proficiencies.

But whatever the task, the general conclusion to be drawn from our experimentation is always the same:

- (1) As compared to native speakers, there are no substantial differences in the strategies our learners use for referring by virtue of their operating in a second language (Bongaerts & Poulishse, 1989; Kellerman *et al.*, 1990).
- (2) Nor are there any important differences in referential ability that could with certainty be attributed to variation in proficiency level amongst learners (Bongaerts, Kellerman & Bentlage, 1987; Bongaerts & Poulishse, 1989).
- (3) Where there are differences between learner and native speaker performance, they are either unpredictable, or they reflect the specific absence of crucial lexical items in the L2. This absence causes the abandonment of the preferred means of reference (as determined e.g. by same speaker's prior L1 protocol), and the substitution of an alternative strategy. The process of substitution appears to be very largely systematic (Bongaerts & Poulishse, 1989; Kellerman *et al.*, 1990).
- (4) When it comes to looking at differences in performance across proficiency groups, the crucial variable affecting strategy choice in the L2 is not proficiency, but *task*. That is, while there are *some* statistically significant differences in strategy selection between proficiency levels, they are as nothing when compared to task-related effects overall (Poulishse, 1989; Poulishse & Schils, 1989).

Other research also bears on the issues at stake here. Catherine Snow and her associates (Davidson, Kline & Snow, 1986)-examined amongst other things how children aged between 6 and 11 defined common objects (i.e. formally or informally), and to see if the preference



for one style or the other in the L1 would transfer to the weaker L2. Davidson *et al.*'s results indicate that children did generally structure their definitions in the same way in both languages, despite the obvious differences in linguistic competence in the L2. 11 Snow and her associates' work also answers a possible objection to our findings that even our least proficient learners have already gone through a critical proficiency threshold and are simply too advanced for major differences in strategic competence to show up.

In similar vein, work on artificial pidgins (e.g. Schumann, no date; Van den Berg, 1988) shows that 'learners' are able to communicate with each other by constructing a pidgin out of a highly restricted target lexicon alone. For instance, in the course of the less than 15 hours they spent practising together, Van den Berg's two subjects developed an artificial pidgin based solely on a list of 172 words of Bahasa Indonesia which permitted them to engage successfully in interactive referential communication tasks. As might be expected, their lexical innovations bear a strong resemblance both to those found in natural pidgin languages and to the conceptual strategies produced by second language learners.<sup>12</sup>

The weight of evidence 'outlined above suggests that there is no justification for providing training in compensatory strategies in the classroom. All things being equal, if learners seem to be poor strategy users in the L2 (worse than they are in the L1), it will be because they do not possess the linguistic means to use strategies properly. The answer seems simple enough' Teach the learners more language and let the strategies look after themselves.<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

I have proposed that the systematic study of compensatory strategies has not been properly served by the construction of taxonomies of strategy types which are identified on the basis of variable and conflicting criteria which confound grammatical form, incidental and inherent properties of referents, and encoding medium with putative cognitive processes. This inconsistency has led to a proliferation of strategy types with little regard for such desirable requirements as psychological plausibility, parsimony and finiteness. In fact if one dissolves away the confounding variables, one need only posit two underlying strategy types. These have been called 'conceptual' and 'code' respectively.

Taking too narrow a view of the relationship that exists between compensatory strategies in the L2 and similar forms of behaviour in the



L1, coupled with attempts to define strategies in terms of consciousness and problem-orientedness, may erroneously have served to delimit a class of behaviours which becomes typically associated with second language learners. This failure to embed compensatory strategy research into a wider framework of communicative behaviour seems to have led a few researchers and teacher-trainers to argue for the teaching of compensatory strategies, on the assumption that strategic competence does not appear to be fully utilised in the L2. However, the Nijmegen experimentation showed no support for this point of view. Nor did we find any consistent variation in strategy use which could be attributed to differences in proficiency. We are therefore sceptical about the efficacy of teaching programmes designed to teach students about compensatory strategies in the classroom. Perhaps it would make more sense to heed the words of one teacher quoted by Færch & Kasper (1986), who, after having been involved in such a programme, reported that his pupils were very good at paraphrasing. His problem was how he was going to make them learn words.

But that's another story.

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#### Notes

1. Cf. Carroll's (1980) analysis of names created by pairs of speakers in a referential communication task. The names are analysed purely in syntactic terms, effectively an analysis of NP structure.
2. Referents will be indicated in capitals. For convenience they will be labelled in English.
3. Of course, the choice of encoding medium brings with it limitations on the properties of the referent that can be utilised, just as the particular details of the communicative setting do. While mime is not an effective means of conveying information if your interlocutor cannot see you, it is also fairly useless in attempts to convey physical properties like colour. Non-verbal behaviour of another kind, ostension, can be enlisted in support, however.
4. Previous publications by members of the Nijmegen group have used different

terminology (e.g. Kellerman *et al.*, 1987; Poulishse, 1987). The present author uses the term *code strategy* to embrace both what we have termed the *linguistic strategy* in earlier papers and non-verbal means of reference such as ostension which also make no appeal to the referent's conceptual representation.

5. This need only occur if the interlocutor construes that a substitution has taken place; substitutions may be such that no compensation will have been indicated. For instance, if a learner states that his or her garden is full of flowers, whereas it is only full of foxgloves, it is quite likely that the substitution will not cause the interlocutor to raise an interpretative eyebrow.
6. I am not aware of any examples in the communication strategy literature of Word Coinages that are not either semantically motivated (e.g. 'picture-place') or grammatically motivated (e.g. 'ironise'). However, they are theoretically entertainable.
7. The use of culturally highly conventional means to depict referents, to imitate the sounds they make, or to refer to them by gesture (e.g. the handshape for PISTOL) is probably best seen as exemplifying code strategies, since their very conventionality may well preclude any analysis of the referent at the conceptual level. Mike Sharwood Smith (personal communication) has suggested the term 'conceptual idioms' for such cases.
8. And this is what we do find. See Poulishse (1989) for results.
9. If this situation smacks of the laboratory experiment it is really no different from trying to point out to a shop assistant which cup one wants in a window display full of crockery, or even trying to explain to a friend which John you saw in the pub the other night the one with the moustache and dog.
10. That is not to say that one should abandon the term 'compensatory strategy' in favour of the more general 'referential strategy'. There clearly *is* a class of behaviours that deserves to be called compensatory (where one has to make up for the lack of specific knowledge, linguistic or conceptual, whether one's own or someone else's). But this class of behaviours crosses the native language/second language boundary and cannot be restricted to the behaviour of learners. At the same time it is essential to show that these types of compensatory behaviours, while themselves guided by a fairly restricted set of principles, are distinct from the processes of ordinary referential communication *only* in that the pertinent knowledge systems are to some extent deficient.
11. Davidson *et al.*'s data look very similar to ours; here is one bilingual example from one child (after only six months of French):  

You go in the rain with it and it keeps you from getting wet [umbrella]  
 . . . quand tu aller dans la pluie avec, tu, tu, le pluie, il fait pas mouill, toi, te mouiller
12. For example, SKATES: *sepatu air keras dingin*, lit. 'shoe water hard cold'; CAT: *teman empat kaki ada tujuh hidup*, lit. 'friend four leg have/be seven life'; KEY: *barang masuk rumah*, lit. 'thing enter house'.
13. There might be some point in creating situations in the classroom which would encourage learners to use strategies and thus overcome inhibitions arising from having to operate in the L2. However, such exercises would be designed to help learners *perform* their competence, rather than build it up (Theo Bongaerts, personal communication).

References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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The Other Side of the Page:

Integrating the Study of Communication Strategies and Negotiated Input in SLA

George Yule and Elaine Tarone

In any conversation, there is the possibility that, at some point, the interactants will realise that they do not share common ground and that they have to work out or negotiate some form of common ground before the interaction can continue. When the interactants come from different cultures or have different first languages, the likelihood increases that the interaction will be characterised by such negotiations of common ground. It is probably in recognition of this fact that a great deal of recent work in second and foreign language research has been devoted to investigating the language learner's role in various types of negotiated interactions: several strands of such research are in place, some focussing on 'communication strategies', some on 'repair', on 'foreigner talk', or on 'conversational adjustment'. But how are these seemingly different lines of research related to one another? Researchers in each strand usually cite research within that strand, but do not seem to try to build on published research in parallel but different strands. It is our belief that this situation is counterproductive.

Part of the title of this paper is taken from some remarks made by Long & Sato (1984) on what they characterised as two separate and non-integrated approaches in second language studies. To give the full context:

Whatever one's view of the likely role of the linguistic environment in SLA, it is surely indisputable that the potential explanatory role of input is preempted by studies which simply ignore speech to the

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learner 'the other side of the page' in IL studies. Yet the majority of IL studies to date do just that. (In like fashion, most input/conversation studies have ignored IL development, too.) (Long & Sato, 1984: 277)

We would agree that there has been a definite separation in the focus of different analytic approaches and that, with rare exceptions, researchers absorbed by one approach have neglected to pay much attention to the work of the other approach. We would like to show that the analytic framework of the input studies does indeed tend to cope with only one side of the page of data transcripts. We will then show that one strand of interlanguage studies, that having to do with strategies of interlanguage communication, provides an analytic framework which copes very well with both sides of the page and may be of some use to those studying comprehensible input and negotiated interaction in SLA.

In a movement which seems to have had its origins in the description of regular features of 'foreigner talk' (Ferguson, 1971), there has evolved a substantial body of work on the nature of the language addressed to second language (L2) learners. The early work in this area, following similar studies conducted on the talk addressed to young children, focussed on the syntactic, lexical and phonological adjustments which native speakers made in speech addressed to non-native speakers. While research has continued in this type of analysis, especially with regard to 'teacher talk' in the second language classroom (cf. Chaudron, 1988), a different type of analytical approach has become more dominant. Following arguments by Hatch (1978) and Long (1981), the emphasis has shifted from describing modifications of linguistic form to analysing conversational adjustments.

These adjustments occur when the native speaker, interacting with the non-native speaker, has to ask for repetitions, seeks clarifications of meaning or tries to get confirmation of what has just been said. The analytic categories have changed from things like 'copula-deletion' and 'analytic paraphrase' to 'clarification request' and 'confirmation check'. The data for analysis has also changed, in the sense that there has to be some type of interactive negotiation of meaning evidenced in the data before the analysis can take place. Extended one-way talk by the native speaker, directed to a non-native speaking audience, might provide examples of copula-deletion, but is unlikely to contain many clarification requests. The methodology for obtaining the necessary data has also had to become more carefully constrained. If you need the interactive negotiation of meaning to take place, then you have to create the necessity

for two-way communication, preferably in the course of which some problem or difficult decision requires a negotiated joint solution. You would also have to be sure that the interactants perceived their role relationships to be of a rather specific type, particularly concerning their relative status. A task constrained in such a way would be likely to produce more useful data for the analysis than one which might tend to become one-way, to involve substantial mutually familiar information display, to be dominated by the higher status participant, and to have no required type of outcome or solution. Accompanying these changes in analytic categories, data and methodology, there has also been a change in philosophy. What had once been an essentially observational approach, incorporating an attempt to describe features of the input which L2 learners naturally received, has now been replaced by a theoretical position concerning the necessary and sufficient conditions for second language acquisition. Not only do learners require input, but that input has to be comprehensible, and it has to be made comprehensible through modified interaction with native speakers in order for acquisition to take place. This has become known as 'the strong version' (Long, 1983a) of the philosophy and, as such, it places its focus almost exclusively on the analysis of the input to the learner, with the learner's output either ignored as unnecessary or considered useful only as a prompt in obtaining comprehensible input. The best-known advocate of this view is, of course, Krashen (e.g. 1981).

More recently, those working within this general approach have turned their attention to the learner's output in a rather special way. Learner output has been investigated to discover if it is a possible source of comprehensible input for other learners. The general conclusion is that under certain conditions learners do benefit from talking to other learners, with Long & Porter (1985) promoting the idea that they derive greater benefit than when talking to native speakers. 1 The benefit, it should be pointed out, is essentially that there are as many markers of negotiated interaction (e.g. clarification requests) in the NNS/NNS data as in the NNS/NS data, and in some cases more. Conditions which seem to be beneficial for an increased number of markers of negotiation are, for example: having pairs of learners perform a specific kind of problem-solving task together (Porter, 1986);2 having learners in small groups rather than in whole class settings (Doughty & Pica, 1986);3 having learners in the groups or pairs from different L1 backgrounds and at different L2 proficiency levels (Varonis & Gass, 1985). In these investigations it always seems to be assumed that more negotiated interaction necessarily means better acquisition opportunities although

the validity of this assumption has not been proven.

Since analysts working in this 'input' line of investigation are widening their scope to include NNS output, we believe that this may be an opportune time to demonstrate the benefits of the interlanguage perspective. Specifically, we would like to offer some insights into the analysis of learner language in interaction which have been obtained by those studying strategies of interlanguage communication (e.g. the contributions in Færch & Kasper, 1983b). For these researchers, a key research question is: when interlocutors discover they do not share common ground, how do they build a common frame of reference to which they can attach language and thereby communicate? The focus here is upon the actual negotiation which takes place under these conditions. These researchers have attempted to develop an analytic framework which will allow them to identify key moves, on both sides, to build that common frame of reference.

We note first how the more recent data-elicitation procedures of the comprehensible input analysts have created exactly the kind of interlanguage communication situations which had long been the province of the communication strategies analysts (and which, interestingly, some investigators have recently been trying to make less 'negotiation-like' for specific analytic purposes (e.g. Tarone & Yule, 1987)).<sup>4</sup> By focussing on the interaction of a pair of interlocutors who have to negotiate the solution to some problem or reach a mutually agreed decision, the input analysts have unwittingly built into their data elicitation procedures that implicationally organised trio of criteria which Færch (1984: 51) argued were fundamental to the identification of interactional phenomena as strategies. They have ensured that the three features of problematicity ® consciousness ® goal-relatedness will be involved in the way the interactants use their available language. Communication strategies are defined by Færch & Kasper (1983a: 36) as 'potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal'. When Varonis & Gass (1985) advocate different proficiency levels and different L1s for the two NNS interactants, they are virtually guaranteeing that a range of communication strategies will be employed since such a pairing would tend to result, *ceteris paribus*, in the least possible 'common ground' being shared by the interactants and the largest number of potential problems for communication. The absence of certain shared features is, in fact, a key component in another definition of communication strategies, which goes like this: 'mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where



the requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared' (Tarone, 1980: 420).

Having suggested that analysts working on comprehensible input will benefit, in principle, from the work of analysts studying interlanguage communication strategies, let us illustrate how this could work, in practice, with two examples. Extract 1 is from a recent article on the advantages of interaction for second language acquisition (Pica, 1987).

Extract 1

NNS	English NS
1 and they have the chwach there	
2	the what? (clarification request)
3 the chwach I know someone that	
4	what does it mean? (clarification request)
5 like um like American people they always go there every Sunday	
6	yes?
7 you know every morning that there pt- that the American people get dressed up to go to um chwach	
8	oh to church I see

In support of her argument that moves which modify the interaction lead to mutual comprehension, Pica identifies two NS turns as examples of clarification requests in this extract (lines 2 and 4), does not identify what the third and fourth NS turns might be, and ignores the NNS contributions. Surely it isn't simply the occurrence of the clarification requests that creates mutual comprehension it must involve what the NNS does in response to the request as well. In fact, in Extract 1, the learner is doing most of the work in the negotiation itself; the native speaker has simply provided a kind of 'kick-in device' (or an 'indicator' according to Varonis & Gass, 1985) which initiates the negotiation. Here, Pica labels the device which prompts the negotiation, but does not analyse the negotiation *per se*; an analysis of the negotiation might profitably make use of the framework of strategies of interlanguage communication.

For example, in line 3, the NNS seems to recognise what is the

focus of the NS's problem and repeats the word (repetition is a strategy that often works), apparently with the same problematic pronunciation, then appears to want to carry on, only to be brought back to that problem word by the NS. The NS's 'clarification requests' (lines 2 and 4) would be labeled 'appeals for assistance' in one well-known communication strategy framework. The NNS's response, lines 5 and 7, seems to be *the* major contribution towards mutual comprehension in this negotiated interaction. The label that comes to mind for this type of NNS contribution is 'circumlocution', which happens to be a communication strategy of the paraphrase type (Tarone 1980).

The point is not that we have a label for the phenomenon, or even that the labels we have are the most useful ones; the point is that we recognise that it is a communication strategy used by the learner that solves the problem. In other words, the key moves by both the learner and the interlocutor within this interaction can be effectively described within a communication strategy framework which can be applied to both sides of the transcription. Surely it is important in a strand of research which focusses upon negotiated input to be able to clearly identify key moves of both partners in the negotiation of meaning. 'Negotiated input' must be not just the result of moves by one speaker, but the result of co-operative moves by both speakers. The communication strategy framework is one which focusses precisely upon such moves by both participants.

Extract 2 is part of an interaction in which a Japanese (J) speaker and a Chinese (CH) speaker perform a problem-solving task in which a number of items have to be selected (from lists) for survival on a desert island. This extract is from Duff (1986).

*Extract 2*

J: Battery no ne?

CH: Bat-bat-battery What's this?

J: Battery uh (2) causing uh produce uh electric energy no?

CH: Oh oh yeah I see

Once again, this type of data can be analysed, on both sides of the interaction, in terms of strategies of interlanguage communication. If one looked only at the clarification request which prompts this negotiation, one might be tempted to say that Extract 2 differs only slightly from Extract 1. Both NS and NNS use clarification requests and receive responses. However, these two interactions are not the same, either in

terms of the form of input to some learner LAD, or in terms of the complexity of the interaction. In Extract 2 both NNS speakers seem to be using topic-comment structure to organise their turns. This is interesting in that topic-comment structure is not typical of NS/NS interactions; thus the input which learners provide one another is quite different from the sort of input originating in overheard NS/NS conversations, the media and so on in Anglophone environments. And, while topic-comment structure may be used by NSs in interacting with NNSs (in 'foreigner talk'), no one yet knows whether NS/NNS interactions contain as much topic-comment structure, in the same environments, as NNS/NNS interactions. This topic-comment structure is evident in the first line, with the Japanese speaker using language switch in the tag. The Chinese speaker's response is also in topic-comment structure and contains an appeal for assistance which the Japanese speaker responds to with an explication (a type of circumlocution in which the speaker uses an L2 term and then spells out its meaning for the hearer). As noted by Tarone & Yule (1987: 59), the NNS/NNS type of interaction produces moves by the NNS which may not be found when that NNS is interacting with a NS. In this case, one NNS gives an explanation of the meaning of a term to the other NNS (using, once again, topic-comment structure). In the range of interactions we have studied, the NNS does not use explication with a NS interlocutor.

We believe these two brief examples provide some evidence that an analytic framework which allows us to move beyond the 'kick-in' stage of a negotiated interaction, and to characterise key moves on both sides of the interaction might be preferable in many cases to one which leads the analyst to only partially analyse one side. We are left, then, with a puzzling question. Why might one choose a predominantly one-sided analytic framework when a possibly more adequate two-sided framework was readily available? The answer cannot be that the input advocates are unaware of the literature on communication strategies, nor does it seem to be that they believe that the literature has no value; they don't attack it, they simply act as if it weren't there. One plausible answer may have less to do with the analytic frameworks and more to do with the types of claims that are typically associated with the different approaches.

With the comprehensible input approach, very grand claims are usually made. Analysts claim to be investigating acquisition and discovering the optimal conditions for second language acquisition to take place. Usually no evidence is presented to suggest that this work has any relationship to the actual long-term development of second language use by the learners taking part in the investigation; rather, a reference is

usually made to Krashen (1981) or Long (1981) where the direct causal connection between the provision of comprehensible input and second language acquisition is presented as theoretically given. This referencing continues to be done despite quite clear disclaimers by some writers who are intimately familiar with the arguments. As one example, Hatch (1983) stated that:

social interaction (conversational interaction and interaction in the second language classroom) leads, I believe to useful input in Krashen's terms, comprehensible input. However, that interaction alone cannot account for acquisition' (Hatch, 1983: 186).

More recently, Chaudron (1988) has reviewed the available evidence and, referring specifically to the claims of Long (1983b), concluded that 'the influence of comprehensibility on the learners' grammar is untested' (Long, 1988: 157). Nevertheless, the assumption of a direct causal connection between input made comprehensible within modified interaction in a second language and the acquisition of that language continues to be made. It is possible that it is this (untested) assumption which has led input analysts to use an analytical framework focussing primarily on one side of the page the input side. Since the learner is assumed to be making progress, it is apparently not necessary to analyse the learner's output in these studies.

Alternatively, in the analysis of strategies of interlanguage communication, following Varadi (1980), Tarone (1980), Corder (1983a), Færch & Kasper (1983a), Poullisse, Bongaerts & Kellerman (1984), claims will be typically limited to descriptive statements about learner output things like the nature of interlanguage use, the ways in which different individuals cope with cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication and occasional statements regarding the benefits for classroom learners if they are encouraged to use certain types of communication strategies to get their interlanguage messages across better. These are claims about language performance. They are not grand claims. They are the muted and hedged claims which come from analysts who are likely to react to Krashen's pronouncements by saying 'researchers need to adopt a much more humble approach' (Færch, 1985: 197).

We would like to suggest that analysts interested in the influence of input upon the process of second-language acquisition might benefit from work done in the related strand of research on communication strategies in at least two ways:

(1) by making use of an analytic framework which encourages the analyst to look at both sides of the conversational exchange,

and enables the analyst to better identify key moves made by both participants in the negotiation and resolution of communication problems; and

(2) by returning to the 'more humble approach' of describing both input and learner performance in interaction, and refraining from making claims about acquisition which are based upon untested assumptions.

In fact, this analytic framework, when used in longitudinal studies of second-language development, may turn out to have an extremely beneficial role in allowing analysts to test whether negotiated interaction really does lead to better second language performance and so to present better support for the acquisition claims. We hope that, in this brief paper, we have provided some reasons for a more integrated approach to studies of second language interaction and an incentive for all of us to pay more attention to the 'other side of the page'.

#### Notes

1. Long & Porter (1985: 216) also conclude: 'This finding contradicts the popular notion that learners are more careful and accurate when speaking with NSs than when speaking with other learners'. This statement is simply wrong, specifically with regard to the wide range of published research findings on the issue. First, it is more than a popular notion that learners vary in grammaticality when they speak to different interlocutors, and that they often improve in accuracy when speaking to native speakers. There is substantial research evidence, gathered over a number of years (and summarised in Tarone, 1988) to contradict Long & Porter's conclusions; for example, Beebe (1983), Flege (1987). Second, the reader might conclude from Long & Porter (1985) that NNSs' communicative behaviour is the same when speaking to other NNSs as to NSs. This conclusion would be unwarranted. Aono & Hillis (1979), cited in Tarone (1980), provide introspective evidence that different communication strategies are used with different interlocutors. Cathcart (1983) found that the age and authority relationships holding between her child NNSs and their interlocutors had a very strong influence on the learners' communicative behaviour.
2. Unfortunately, in the same edited volume in which Porter's (1986) claims are made in support of problem-solving tasks (e.g. the 'Lost at Sea' task requiring choice of items for survival), Duff (1986) reports that the same problem-solving task did not produce significantly higher occurrences of a range of interaction modifiers (such as clarification requests) than a non-problem-solving task requiring learners to take part in a debate. More turns in the interaction didn't result in more interactional modification.
3. Again, unfortunately, Pica & Doughty had reported in an earlier paper that 'the subset of these conversational adjustments (clarification requests and confirmation and comprehension checks) was more available during the

teacher-fronted interaction (than in group work) and again, this difference was statistically significant' (Pica & Doughty, 1985: 240). There seems to be a problem here.

4. Tarone & Yule (1987: 53) specifically set out a procedure to examine the ways in which a speaker, without interactive assistance from an attentive listener, might solve pre-determined communicative problems, and to discover if those solutions differed in NS/NS versus NNS/NNS transactions.

#### References

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Håkan Ringbom

In the psychology of learning it is commonly agreed that new learning is largely based on what the learner already knows. A basic question following from this is how similarity between new material and previous knowledge affects the different stages of the learning process. So far, the importance of similarity for an understanding of the learning process has not been sufficiently recognised, at least not among linguists.<sup>2</sup>

In the learning of new L2 material, similarity refers either to L2 material already learnt or to L1 knowledge. Previous knowledge includes L1 knowledge, which may be variably relevant, depending on how learners perceive the distance between the L1 and the target language. (See Kellerman, 1977; 1983; Ringbom, e.g. 1987). The L2 learner is constantly concerned with the question how similarity, intralingual or interlingual, can be efficiently used in learning. From the learner's perspective, the important question is not what linguistic differences there are between L1 and L2: it is rather a question of what similarities to his L1 can be perceived in the L2 at different stages of learning. These perceived similarities need not in every case represent actual close similarities between the words, structures and functions of L1 and L2: they may be only partially, or occasionally even incorrectly perceived as such, being based on superficial resemblances between the forms of words. All the same, if crosslinguistic similarities can be established, as they are in the case of learning a language closely related to one's L1, they will considerably facilitate learning, especially comprehension. Otherwise we would not be able to account for the indisputable fact that it is easier to learn a related foreign language than a wholly unrelated one.<sup>3</sup>



Crosslinguistic L1 influence, which has usually been called transfer, is thus closely linked with perceived similarity. Lack of perceived similarities can, however, also cause a type of covert, or indirect, crosslinguistic influence to occur. When learners do not have the necessary L2 procedures or L2 words at their disposal they may resort to L1-based procedures and words to compensate for gaps in their knowledge, or they may simply avoid using such words or structures as are not found in the L1. Covert crosslinguistic influence is especially frequent at the early stage of learning wholly unrelated languages, where beginners cannot establish frames of reference for their learning of the target language.

While covert crosslinguistic influence will lead to errors in production, overt crosslinguistic influence may either inhibit or (more commonly) facilitate learning. It is important to point out that this crosslinguistic influence frequently leads to fully efficient communication, in both comprehension and production. Overt crosslinguistic influence is based on similarities perceived between words and structures, and it occurs above all between related languages. If the languages are so close as to be mutually intelligible, as is the case with the Scandinavian languages, not much conscious learning is needed at all, beyond a few false friends in lexis and an understanding of some basic differences in pronunciation. If learners can start out from a platform so high that they can be intelligible to speakers of another language by speaking their own L1s, they may never even bother to try to reach full native speaker competence in production. The less learners have to learn in order to communicate, the sooner their L2 proficiency tends to fossilise. In fact, in an inter-Scandinavian context speakers do not normally find it necessary to alter their own linguistic identity by making concessions to the listener other than speaking a little more clearly and distinctly than when talking to speakers of the same L1. This is natural: if communication generally works without much conscious effort, the learner usually does not have sufficient integrative motivation ever to sound like a native speaker.

That crosslinguistic similarities can also be utilised in the learning of languages less close to each other than the Scandinavian ones has been shown in a Dutch-Scandinavian project in Umeå. An important aim of the project is to develop methods where a few hours of teaching would lead to a situation parallel to the inter-Scandinavian scene, Dutch and Scandinavian speakers being able to communicate with each other by speaking their own L1. The similarities between Dutch and Swedish/Danish are not sufficiently obvious to be clear without teaching. However, if teaching really exploits the similarities existing between Dutch and Swedish/Danish and provides guidance to the differences that also exist,

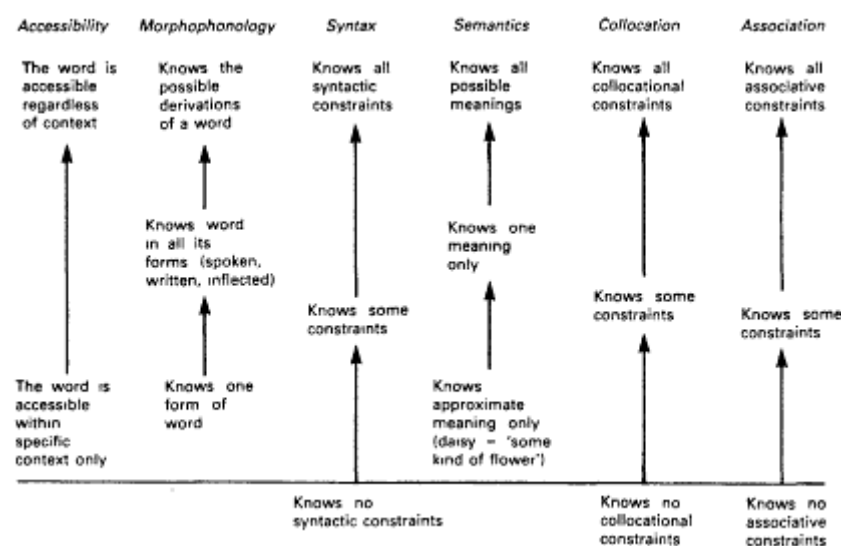


Figure 13.1  
Lexical knowledge

it does not take very long for a learner to develop an ability to understand the other language. As little as ten hours of teaching produces surprisingly good results in a subsequent listening comprehension test (Hedqvist, 1985).

Overt crosslinguistic influence manifests itself in all the areas of phonology, grammar and lexis, as well as in discourse and pragmatics. In the 1970s especially, transfer was investigated in a number of phonological and grammatical studies, while vocabulary did not get much attention. However, recent interest in vocabulary studies is generally leading to new considerations of lexical crosslinguistic influence.

There are, however, many problems in studying L2 vocabulary learning. One of them is determining what knowing a word really means. Lexical knowledge can be regarded as a system, or a set of systems, with a number of different dimensions. It may be represented by Figure 13.1 (Ringbom, 1987: 37).

At the early stages of learning learners strive to reduce their learning burden by simplifying the new L2 words encountered along several dimensions as compared with their meaning and use by native speakers.

Especially if the learning takes place in a classroom situation, they will frequently establish simplified one-to-one relationships of new items to existing L1 labels. As learning progresses, learners not only learn new lexical items, but they also modify their knowledge of the items they have already learnt by becoming aware of, for example, polysemy and the importance of context, and are thus able to move up the scale of lexical knowledge in all the different dimensions. They will soon become aware that the one-to-one relationships between the L1 and L2 which they originally assumed do not actually hold, except possibly in some very few cases. They learn the associative value of an item, the ways in which it can collocate with other words and can be used to form other words, and from having been comprehended by the learner only in a special context, the words can become available for production without any stimulus provided.

There may be differences in the ways in which crosslinguistic influence can be seen in comprehension, as compared with production. 'As a *reception* procedure, transfer implies that the learner interprets incoming L2 utterances on the basis of her L1 knowledge. It is thus a case of inferencing, more precisely "interlingual inferencing"' (Færch & Kasper, 1987b).

The first time we meet a new L2 word in a text we try to infer its meaning with the aid of intralingual, interlingual or contextual cues (see Carton, 1971; Haastrup, 1985). When learners make informed guesses about the meaning of a word they may make use of all their world knowledge, the situation and their linguistic knowledge. Inferencing can be regarded as the first stage of vocabulary learning.

Learners may understand a word the first time they meet it because it is already included in what has been called 'potential vocabulary': 4 their linguistic knowledge already contains elements which make it possible to work out at least the approximate meaning of a new word. Part of this linguistic knowledge consists of previously learnt L2 elements (for instance, if learners know the elements of a compound they are often able to work out its meaning without having seen the compound before), but if the target language is a language closely related to the learner's L1, the formal similarity between L1 words and L2 words often becomes an even more important basis for the potential vocabulary.

If learners can perceive crosslinguistic lexical similarities to the L1, L1-based knowledge will be an extremely important factor in the process of comprehension. Traditional 'transfer studies' did not pay much attention to comprehension, but since comprehension normally precedes production,

the study of the learning process cannot afford to neglect the receptive side, even though the role of L1 knowledge is more difficult to assess here.

In production there is no scarcity of studies investigating transfer. In particular, error analyses (where one category of errors was commonly labelled 'transfer' or 'interlingual'), were frequent in the 1970s. Although error analysis undoubtedly has its limitations, it can provide a good starting point for studying the underlying processes of L2 learning. By studying the product we may arrive at a knowledge of the process. However, most error analyses were descriptive in nature, merely dividing the errors into different categories without much discussion of the processes involved.

It also lies in the nature of error analysis that it focusses on the negative effects of crosslinguistic influence. 'Positive transfer', on the other hand, was rarely even mentioned. In a way this is natural, because it is much more difficult to identify than negative transfer. Although the labels 'positive' and 'negative' apply to the product, not the process level, and 'transfer' must be regarded as a process, the question whether L1 influence has a facilitating or inhibiting effect is definitely not a trivial one.

In lexis, positive transfer has been more acknowledged than in other linguistic areas. This can be seen from the existence of some studies of cognates, particularly between English and French, and their influence on L2 learning. 5 It has been estimated that the ratio between English-French 'good' cognates and deceptive cognates, the 'false friends', where crosslinguistic formal similarity is partly or wholly misleading, is approximately eleven to one (Hammer, 1978).

Færch & Kasper (1987b) give some concrete examples of positive transfer in their analysis of the spoken German and Danish learners, which they followed up with retrospective interviews:

Wir haben *Schulpflicht* his die die neunte Klasse

Und äh die äh die sprech/Sprachen lernen können zwischen äh neu *neusprachlich* nennen wir es das heisst dass man die neue Sprachen wie Deutsch und Französisch und Englisch lernt aber auch Latein.

The Danish learners afterwards reported that they did not know the words *Schulpflicht* or *neusprachlich* before. The elements of the compounds were, however, known, and above all the learner's correct production of the words was facilitated by the equivalent compounds also

occurring in Danish. The compounds can therefore be said to have existed in the learner's potential vocabulary, 6 and they provide concrete examples of crosslinguistic influence leading to fully acceptable utterances. Here, as is often the case, crosslinguistic influence occurs in combination with use of intralingual knowledge.

Few investigations contain material which is supplemented by retrospective interviews. Most material showing crosslinguistic lexical influence comes from error analyses, but the same procedures which lead to errors in the examples below can very well produce acceptable utterances in other contexts. The problem of assessment of the facilitating versus inhibiting effects lies in the difficulty of finding out when fully acceptable utterances are the result of assumed similarities to L1. (One case where this problem is tackled is described in Poullisse, Bongaerts and Kellerman (1987).)

Crosslinguistic lexical influence in production can be divided into what I have called lexical transfer and borrowing.<sup>7</sup> Lexical transfer means that learners assume identity of semantic structure between the words in L1 and L2, and it is manifested in loan translations and semantic overextension. *Schulpflicht* and *neusprachlich* above do not deviate from the target language norm, but frequently loan translations of this kind lead to errors. Some examples are:<sup>8</sup> 'oldboy' for 'bachelor' (the equivalent Finnish word, *vanhapoika*, contains the elements 'old' + 'boy'); similarly 'undertrousers' for 'pants', from either Finnish *alushousut* or Swedish *underbyxor*. Not only compounds but also phrases can be formed on this model, as in *she is with in a team* (Swedish *vara reed i* = 'take part in', 'be a member of').

Erroneous loan translations of this type will be familiar to language teachers everywhere. The other, even more frequent, type of lexical transfer error consists of overextension of the semantic properties of a word. When a Swedish learner writes 'carry a baby in one's fathom', the explanation lies in the Swedish word *famn* having two different meanings: it can be rendered by either 'lap' or 'fathom'. The learner knows one of these translation equivalents and assumes the other one as well, overextending the semantic properties of the L2 word on the basis of the L1 model. Arabski (1979: 34, 48 ff.) uses the term 'primary counterpart' for much the same phenomenon.

Semantic overextension and loan translations of compounds and phrases are processes where there is frequently no formal crosslinguistic similarity between the words involved. Formal crosslinguistic similarity may contribute to lexical transfer, but it is not a primary cause, since

lexical transfer also frequently occurs across unrelated languages where little or almost no such similarity can be found, except for some infrequent loanwords. Arabski (1979: 103) notes that 'the application of primary counterparts . . . was the most commonly used of all strategies' in his corpus of errors made by Polish learners of English. Finnish learners of English also make frequent errors of this type, as in 'bite oneself in the language' for 'tongue' (Finnish *kieli* = both 'tongue' and 'language').

While lexical transfer has its parallels in other linguistic areas, borrowing is confined to the area of lexis. Borrowing means that the search for a lexical item activates an L1 item, which is then taken over into the L2 either in an unmodified form or in a form where it has been modified by L2 phonology and/or morphology (hybrids, blends and relexifications). In a full language switch, where the L1 item is used in an L2 context without any modification at all, there seems to be a difference between the borrowing of function words and the borrowing of content words in my material. When content words are switched, there is generally crosslinguistic formal similarity between the word used and the correct L2 word, but this need not be the case with function words.

At least for intermediate and advanced learners, there seems to be a difference between borrowing and lexical transfer, if we compare L1 influence with influence from a (related) non-native language (LN). Study of errors in English made in writing by Finns and Swedish-speaking Finns (Ringbom, 1978; 1987: ch. 8) reveals that whereas lexical transfer from a language usually requires a native, or native-like, competence in that language, borrowing can take place from a language of which the learner has only a slight knowledge. Borrowing, especially from LN, strongly depends on formal similarity, the exception being high-frequency function words, which are often taken over from LN without having any formal similarity to the same word in either the target language or the L1. 9

Thus, whereas transfer takes place primarily from the learner's L1, regardless of whether or not this language is related to the target language, borrowing takes place from a related language, regardless of whether or not this language is the mother tongue. (Ringbom, 1987: 128)

The false friends make up a category intermediate between borrowing and lexical transfer. In their lexical search for an L2 word learners activate another existing L2 word, because the latter is formally very similar to an L1 word, though it is semantically different. The semantic difference between the appropriate and the produced word may range on the scale between wholly different in meaning to near-identical, or identical in

other contexts. Swedish-English false friends illustrating words placed differently on the scale can be exemplified by the pairs: *fabric* Sw. *fabrik*, 'factory'; *actual* Sw. *aktuell*, 'current', 'topical'; *beware* Sw. *bevara*, 'preserve'; *deal* (in the example *people can deal the jobs*) Sw. *dela*, 'divide', 'share'. 10 Some instances on the latter end of the scale could, in fact, also be regarded as examples of semantic overextension and be included under 'lexical' transfer, the only difference being that formal similarity between L1 and L2 is essential for the false friends, but not necessarily present in cases of semantic overextension.

## Conclusion

What has the study of crosslinguistic lexical influence contributed to the understanding of the foreign language learning process? It has brought into focus the importance of some concepts and ideas which have so far received too little attention. These concepts are interlinked: perceived similarities, potential knowledge and (the importance of) comprehension.

(1) Perceived crosslinguistic and intra-lingual similarities provide learners with a reference frame which they can lean on when learning new tasks and material. Because of this, perceived similarities are much more frequently an aid to the foreign language learner than an obstacle.

(2) Potential knowledge is relevant not only for vocabulary: potential knowledge of grammar is at least as important. If learners' intuitive L1 knowledge of basic grammatical categories and their functions can be found to work for L2 as well, they will be able to concentrate on learning lexical items, without having to try to figure out the grammatical functions of, for example, case endings in Finnish (for speakers of Germanic languages) or articles and prepositions in Germanic languages (for Finnish learners).

(3) Comprehension must be regarded in some essential respects as a process which is even more important to study than production. We must not forget that a communication situation can work quite well when both interlocutors speak their own L1. The Dutch-Scandinavian project in Umeå has shown that relatively little teaching may be needed to achieve reasonable success in communication between speakers of closely related languages. The bilingual situation in Finland also provides numerous examples of communicatively successful situations where both



speakers use their L1.

If crosslinguistic influence on comprehension is studied, its primarily facilitating, not inhibiting, effect on learning will become clear. And if we accept that comprehension and production constantly interact in the learning process, the importance of 'positive transfer' will also be recognised for production.

Further studies are needed to illuminate the role of crosslinguistic influence on foreign language learning. We need investigations of how similarity works on the learning process, and we should study the interaction between crosslinguistic influence and the many other important variables in the language learning process, e.g. mode of learning, age, proficiency in L1, L2 and other languages, learners' individual characteristics and their individual styles of learning, etc. We might also investigate whether crosslinguistic influence functions differently in item learning, where the form of the item is uniquely linked to some other form or a unique referent, compared with system learning (commutation of some forms or referents while some other form is kept constant).<sup>11</sup> The methods employed in such future investigations should not be exclusively linguistic, but also psychological, sociological and pedagogical.

#### Notes

1. A more exhaustive treatment of this topic as well as of related problems, is Ringbom (1987), which contains accounts of the material and experiments providing the basis for the views expressed in this paper. The investigation shows clear differences between Finns and Swedish-speaking Finns learning English, i.e. learners learning a wholly unrelated *versus* a closely related language in a context with minimal cultural or educational differences.
2. Among those linguists who are certainly aware of the importance of similarity, one should mention James (1980) and Wode (e.g. 1981).
3. In spite of a few surprising statements to the contrary (Winitz & Reeds, 1975: 69), it is not only common sense but also a well-established fact that the learning of a language related to one's L1 requires much less learning effort than learning a totally unrelated language. The native English speaker who sets out to learn Dutch or French simply has much less to learn than if he starts learning Vietnamese or Arabic. (See e.g. Corder, 1983b.)
4. The term 'potential knowledge' was apparently first used in a Russian paper by Berman, Buchbinder & Bezdeneznych (1968). See also Denninghaus (1976) and Takala (1984).
5. See for example Lobo (1966), Hammer (1978), Hammer & Monod (1976), Morrissey (1981).
6. These two German examples also illustrate that although comprehension normally precedes production in both L1 and L2 learning, a word may be

used productively before it has ever been processed in comprehension, if it is present in the learner's potential vocabulary.

7. The term *borrowing* has been used in several other senses as well: see e.g. Corder (1983b), Majer (1983), Poplack, Wheeler & Westwood (1987).
8. The examples in this paper come from written material (essays and translations) analysed in Ringbom (1978; 1983a; 1987).
9. The tendency to shift function words to a foreign language not from the L1, but from another foreign language, even where there are no formal similarities between these words, was already noted by Vildomec (1963: 170).
10. Lists of Swedish-English false friends have been produced by Ekblom (1932), Ernolv (1958) and Hargevik & Stevens (1978). In most false friends, divergent historical developments have led to different meanings of what was originally the same word. It is' hardly possible to find such false friends in Finnish and English, there being only a few chance similarities between words with totally different meanings.
11. The distinction between item learning and system learning was first made by Cruttenden (1981) for L1 learning, but it could be applied to L2 learning as well (Ringbom, 1983b).

## References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.



## SECTION FOUR

### CLASSROOM RESEARCH

This section is about classroom research: research conducted in second/foreign language classrooms or research which helps us understand better what goes on in language classrooms. Claus's interest in classroom research had a number of sources, originating primarily from his involvement in the Project in Foreign Language Pedagogy (PIF). This project, initiated and directed by Claus at the Department of English, University of Copenhagen, was carried out in close cooperation with high school teachers. While the project initially (1976-80) focussed on Danish learners' English interlanguage produced in non-education contexts, it later (1980-6) adopted the objective of examining the communicative structure of the foreign language classroom, where most of the learners' interlanguage development took place.

Claus was centrally involved in the international movement in interlanguage research, in which L2 classroom research was a major part by the late 1970s. His interest in more cognitive aspects of language acquisition naturally led him to inquire into the formal aspects of language teaching and into pedagogic grammar.

Three important studies resulted from Claus's investigations in language classrooms. One, 'Rules of thumb and other teacher formulated rules in the foreign language classroom' (1986), examines the structure and function of teacher-formulated rules of grammar and use in Danish EFL classroom instruction. Different interactional patterns in spontaneous rule formulation by the teacher are discerned, typically occurring as part of a repair sequence. This study shows the need for greater analysis of pedagogically relevant descriptions of rules to be taught, and for the training of teachers to apply their knowledge of the structure of the target language and of learners' acquisition processes. A second study is 'Metatalk in FL classroom discourse' (1985), which demonstrates the potential of both less and greater explicitness in teachers' treatment of target language code as a guide to learners' progressive knowledge and use of the target language. Finally, in 'Focus shifts in FL classroom discourse'

(1987), a distinction is made between types of talk geared towards different goals in FLT: content, meta and practice talk. Claus examines what occasions shift between these types of talk, and how they are related to the target language (English and German as L2) and learners' proficiency levels.

The papers in this section are each concerned with research into the pedagogical aspects of L2 classrooms. The first paper in this section is concerned with the methodology of classroom research. In it, Craig Chaudron points out that observations made in a classroom setting are only as good as the instruments and procedures used to measure them. Chaudron indicates how rare it still is to find studies in the literature that have used observational instruments or procedures which have been shown to be valid and reliable. Ultimately, our confidence in the findings of classroom research is dependent on the use of valid and reliable procedures of observation. Given the data that it presented in the next three papers particularly that of Breen Chaudron's challenge is an exceedingly important one.

The second paper in this section is by Patsy Lightbown. Lightbown explores both theoretically and empirically the role of form-focussed teaching, finding support for its usefulness. She argues that when a feature which is within a learner's margin of learnability (developmentally, or as a 'variational feature') is consistently taught, the effect of teaching can be sustained.

The third paper by Michael Breen delves into the language teaching techniques teachers use, and importantly, why they use the particular techniques that they do. Through the availability of such information, we can come to provide appropriate supports through teacher in-service programmes. From a research perspective, Breen's paper demonstrates that what may outwardly appear as the same action may be differently motivated and interpreted according to one's own implicit theory of language learning, thus reminding us of the need to be cautious with studies which rely heavily on 'objective' observations of the teaching process.

The fourth and final paper, by Merrill Swain, is concerned with a less typical classroom setting for teaching a foreign language, one in which young students are learning content through the L2. In programmes where this is the case, it is typically assumed that language learning will be enhanced through using the L2 as a communicative tool to learn subject content (e.g social studies, mathematics). Taking examples from French immersion classes in Canada, where French is the medium of

instruction for anglophone children, Swain argues that typical content teaching is inadequate as a second language learning environment. She provides suggestions for ways in which content teaching can be manipulated and complemented to enhance its language learning potential.





14

Validation in Second Language Classroom Research:  
The Role of Observation

CRAIG CHAUDRON

Til Claus

Sommernatslyset svindende i bålets  
gnister drog os sammen,  
drøftede forskning  
og baggrund;  
fra modsatte retninger,  
begge ved sit vejkryds.  
Gid du kunne fortsætte med os.

One of the impressive features of Claus Færch's work was his exemplification of not speculating on principles of language learning and teaching without having closely studied their substantive processes and products. His paper on 'Rules of Thumb . . .' (1986) is a clear case of derivation through classroom observation of a general pattern for teacher-formulated rule use in classrooms, which then opened up a large area for further research into the 'real' goings on of grammar teaching. Claus was fully aware, however, that his induction of steps in rule presentation might not, in the end, prove to be the critical features of teacher and student interaction in grammar learning. Yet they provided him with a framework within which he could place his further observations. The process of research inherently involves a dynamic validation, application, and re-evaluation of such constructs through empirical testing and theoretical restructuring (cf. Chaudron, 1986a).

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The purpose of this paper is to explore more precisely how observational analyses of classroom interaction can be validated, and further, how the validation of claims about instructional variables (such as the effectiveness of programmes, teaching methods, syllabus changes, materials, rule presentations and so on) depends on the application of valid observational analyses. Validity, which has many aspects but refers in essence to the determination of the 'truth' of an analysis or theory, is a fundamental goal in researchers' efforts to understand and predict language learning and teaching outcomes. The paper will first briefly describe the place of observation in research validation, then show the applicability of validation in second language classroom research with respect to different methodological orientations, then illustrate three different approaches to validation of instructional research by means of observation.

Campbell & Stanley (1972) proposed the general research considerations of 'internal' and 'external' validity. These refer respectively to the truth of observations within a study, and to the generalisability of the observations or findings across studies. Measurement systems (such as tests) and observational procedures, which are subject to the form of internal validity known as 'instrument validity', play a vital role in ensuring overall internal validity, namely by documenting that relevant treatments and processes in fact occur. Observations of a language classroom, whether by means of planned schemas or *post hoc* characterisations and discourse analysis, must undergo an evaluation of their reliability as descriptions (by means of intra- and interobserver consistency checks). This reliability assessment is the initial step in instrument validation. However, the validity of such observational descriptions as constructs relevant to the research questions can only be fully attained if the observations and summary findings of the study are shown to hold in more general ways (external validity). Such validation is accomplished through rigorous application of sampling procedures and design principles. In general, the same or similar observational analyses must be applied to new contexts and populations. (See current treatments of many of these issues in Frick & Semmel, 1978; Brinberg & Kidder, 1982; Brinberg & McGrath, 1982; 1985; Cone, 1982; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Folger, Hewes & Poole, 1984; Hoge, 1985; Poole & McPhee 1985.)

### Methodological Orientations

Researchers can describe classroom events according to various theoretical perspectives, which lead to different methodological orien-

tations to observational analysis. These orientations might be broadly characterised as, for example, 'classification' or 'process' (van Lier, 1984), 'systematic' or 'interpretive' (Edwards & Westgate, 1987), 'interaction analysis', 'discourse analysis', or 'ethnographic' (Chaudron, 1988; see earlier discussion in Long, 1980). The principal distinction among these rests on the degree to which an exhaustive and structured set of categories of behaviour are used to describe the interaction.

Classification, systematic, and interaction/discourse analysis perspectives use precisely defined observational categories organised in structured systems (as in Moskowitz' FLint system, 1976; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Fanselow's FOCUS, 1977; Allen, Fröhlich & Spada, 1984; and others related to these). Process-oriented, interpretive, and ethnographic perspectives adopt context-dependent, location-specific descriptions, often only after observation has begun (as in various applications in Allwright, 1975; Trueba, Guthrie & Au, 1981; van Lier, 1982; Bailey, 1983). As is clear from the general educational and psychological literature on validity cited above, and as I have discussed on other occasions (Chaudron, 1986a; 1986b; 1988: Chapter 2), such descriptions, like any measurement instruments, must be evaluated for their reliability first, and then for other forms of validity. <sup>1</sup> This is so regardless of the theoretical perspective taken, as LeCompte & Goetz (1982) demonstrate quite clearly in discussing reliability and validity in ethnographic research.

As an illustration of this rationale for validation, McCutcheon's (1981) exposition of validity in educational research is worth reiterating and applying to a recent ethnographic study (Enright, 1984). While McCutcheon was especially concerned with qualitative, process-oriented research (as in ethnography), her argument applies equally well to the classification-minded, quantitative researcher who might, for example, adopt the set of descriptors in Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) type of hierarchical discourse analytical system (as recently done in Ramirez, 1988). While avoiding use of the term 'validation', McCutcheon is clearly proposing a basis for validating such research. She claims that interpretation of observations comprises three types: (1) 'the forming or construction of patterns', (2) the discernment of 'the social meaning of events', and (3) 'the relating of particulars of the setting to external considerations', such as theories or other events. In order to judge any of these three types of interpretation, however, McCutcheon further points out that either the interpreter or others must evaluate them on the basis of (a) the LOGIC or argumentation, (b) the sufficiency of EVIDENCE, (c) the agreement or CONSISTENCY with other evidence, and (d) the SIGNIFICANCE of the analysis (in terms of theoretical additions or

predictive value, etc.). Furthermore, in assuming an audience for their interpretations, researchers also necessarily expect *intersubjective* (i.e. 'objective', in the sense of 'public') understanding of their descriptions, and some degree of generalisability of the descriptions to other situations. These various methods of evaluating interpretations are commonsense expressions of the distinct ways in which research observations are validated.

For example, Enright's (1984) predominantly ethnographic study uses the concept 'participant structures', a relatively low-inference unit of observation applying to the changes in 'configurations of concerted action', as a basis for his analysis of the differential choices available to teachers. By varying aspects of participant structure, teachers can engender more or less student turn-taking. Regardless of Enright's research question, his observations and categorisations are still subject to the constraints McCutcheon referred to if we are to regard them as valid.

I will refer to McCutcheon's points (a) through (d) to illustrate how Enright's analysis needs validation. First, there must be an internal LOGIC (point (a)) that systematically interrelates the different participant structures (a type of 'construct' validity to be elaborated on below). In order to ensure that these constructs are viable, there is a need for the prior evaluation of instrument validity in the form of interobserver reliability: the changes in dimensions of actors, topics, etc. that together constitute different participant structures must be identifiable and recognised by independent observers (intersubjectively). These steps are essentially equivalent to determining the 'content' validity of the observations, as one would do in verifying that items on a test represent the skills or knowledge individuals are being tested on. If a new observer is actually presented with the data on which the researcher's claims are based, interobserver reliability is tested. If the observer only evaluates the reasonableness of the interpretations and generalised observations, a limited sort of content validation is conducted.

Skipping over point (b) for the moment and considering point (c), observations of participant structures must also be CONSISTENT with other behaviour associated with them ('concurrent' validity), which Enright attempts to demonstrate (see next paragraph). Finally, with regard to point (d), the analysis must prove to have some bearing on further findings with these or similar teachers and contexts (generalisability), and should broadly have consequences for better understanding or control over teaching and learning in such contexts.

Enright's primary concern is in fact to illustrate how different

participant structures co-occur with differential patterns of teacher and student talk (McCutcheon's point (c)); he lists the percentages of teacher and student talk for both small group and full group participant structures (these turn out to be relatively familiar 'activities' such as 'Reading', 'Math Lesson', 'Letter practice-drill') in two different teachers' classes. Based on his prior analysis of these teachers' approaches, and microanalysis of some of the lessons, Enright claims that the proportion of teacher talk across activities correlates with (not a statistical test; only two teachers are involved anyway) the differences in the teachers' approaches to turn-taking in participant structures (among other differences). The argument suffers however, from a failure to recognise point (b) above: EVIDENCE. There is a lack of adequate quantitative analysis or illustration of the 'microanalysis' of specific participant structures to demonstrate that there are in fact relationships (of a causal or other associative nature) between these variables. For example, only the range of the two teachers' talk is highlighted (and a selected range for one of them as well). They differ little in either full range (proportion of teacher talk is 55.4% to 76.7%, versus 42.7% to 73.2%) or central tendency (medians of 62% and 63.3%, respectively), and the quite similar ranges of student talk are omitted from the discussion. While Enright's full analysis might have the potential of providing significant new insights, without appropriate analysis of observed events, and their use in documenting the occurrence of specific participant structures, the substance of the construct is not validated.

### Three Approaches to Validation Using Observations

As I have elaborated on in greater detail elsewhere (Chaudron, 1988), several classroom researchers employing observational schemes have attempted validations of their systems in different ways. In a recent review of L1 classroom observation systems, Hoge (1985) showed that many studies demonstrated low validity. He defined three types of validity: *construct validity*, *criterion-related validity*, and *treatment validity*. In the following the application of each of these in L2 classroom research will be illustrated.

The most typical method adopted for *construct validation* is to correlate overall scores on some classroom behaviours with separate scores of these behaviours obtained with parallel measures (as in Campbell & Fiske's (1959) classic multitrait-multimethod approach, where multiple traits are assessed each by multiple methods). This procedure in effect substantiates that the constructs involved in the scheme accurately reflect the behaviours they define. Such a procedure, namely correlating teacher

ratings of occurrence of various events with low-inference tallying of categories representing those events, was suggested by Ullmann & Geva (1982) as a possible validation of their TALOS system. Otherwise, it has not been widely adopted in recent research (though see Moskowitz' (1976) example of a similar approach, and a critique of it in Chaudron (1988: 25)).

A form of *criterion-related validation* was performed by Fröhlich, Spada & Allen (1985) when they attempted to establish a relationship between programmatically defined degrees of communicative language teaching, and the combined values from several independent dimensions of classroom events (on their Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching COLT scheme). This commendable effort is unfortunately rare in the L2 research literature. Spada (1987), Allen *et al.* (1987), and Lightbown & Spada (1987) have applied this COLT scheme in further efforts to relate observed classroom processes with learning progress in both English and French as a second language (measured by pre- to post-test improvements on various measures). The use of the instrument in these studies resembles that of 'treatment' validation (to be described later in this section), with the limitation being that the researchers did not have control over the supposed implementation of programmatic or methodological innovations. Their results have tended more to demonstrate program- or method-internal variability on the observational categories, so that the investigators are led to explore only specific relationships between individual category differences among classrooms and student learning.

While these correlations are a fruitful source of new hypotheses, they constitute neither further validation of the instruments, nor a direct validation of the independent effects of instruction. Spada (1987) and Allen *et al.* (1987) are careful to demonstrate, in fact, the extent to which certain of the quantitative analyses derived from the COLT tend to obscure other critical qualitative features of their observed classes (such as the nature of interactive discourse, within a category such as 'formal' focus), which interact with the categorial observations. Such findings lead one at first to seek refinement or addition of definitions of certain categories (such as negotiation and concreteness of feedback) that are theoretically or empirically justified as significant to instruction. Further, researchers would prefer to control such important variables more carefully when implementing studies of instructional variables. Both refinement and increased control are part of the continual process of evolution in classroom research referred to in Chaudron (1986a).<sup>3</sup>

*Treatment* validity refers to the determination of whether obser-

ventional measures are sensitive to direct intervention on the points being observed. It has too rarely been instituted in L2 classroom research. This approach fits within formative (process-oriented) evaluation procedures, as discussed by Long (1984), where continued observation of classroom processes follows the implementation of new curriculum, teaching approaches, or materials. The lack of such research has of course limited the (internal) validity of many L2 educational comparisons, because the demonstration of delivery of the treatment was neglected (see Long (1984) for further arguments), and only product outcomes were evaluated. Nevertheless, one recent methodology comparison experiment (Bejarano, 1987), and one curriculum innovation project (Rea, 1987) illustrate the potential as well as some of the difficulties of such a design. In these studies, the classroom processes intended by the new curriculum or predicted by the experimental methodology were documented using an observation schedule.

In the curriculum development study, a project implementing a task-based academic note-taking course, Rea (1987) proposes a model for curriculum validation that includes (1) checks on the construct validity of the curriculum specifications, (2) criterion-related validity of the intended tasks and materials, and (3) 'process-referenced' construct and criterion-related validation of teacher input and learner 'uptake' (what learners learn). Without proposing the use of any formal observation scheme, Rea illustrates the observational component of validation by counting the number of student learning tasks (over the entire course) which belonged to different categories relevant to the curriculum goals. These were presumably *observed* to have occurred, and not merely intended in the lesson plans.

Here the unit of analysis is not specific classroom interaction behaviours or processes, but the *tasks* that are the core of the curriculum (just as the COLT scheme uses 'activities' as a base unit). No clear evaluation or criterion is offered to determine whether the observed outcome (an apparent emphasis on the process rather than the product of note-taking) was fully satisfactory. Rea's approach seems to lack a direct demonstration of the relative success or failure of each task, in either a process or product sense, and the evaluation rests at the level of documenting the occurrence of the tasks only. Although Rea's tally appears to show a particular proportion of process and product focus at the task level, without prior expectations for the distribution of these, it is difficult to evaluate the 'treatment' validity of these observations.

The argument is in fact circular, if all the researcher has to do to



implement treatment change is to add or subtract a task (or other behaviour), and then simply count the change when it is implemented. Instead, the treatment changes should be measurable by independent criteria (that is, by means of more specific process and product results *within* the observed tasks). Allen *et al.* (1987) recognise this when they do a dual analysis of not only the degree of 'analytical' and 'experiential' qualities of activity units among their observed Core French classes, but also the experiential and analytical nature of processes within those activities.

A study reported by Bejarano (1987), with a much more complete explication in Sharan (1984), was part of a larger curriculum experiment in Israel in 1980-1, in which 'co-operative learning' techniques were instituted in both native language literature classes and English as a second language classes. The co-operative learning methods under investigation were two rather different approaches, one a peer tutoring technique, and the other a 'Group Investigation' technique (this term used in Sharan (1984) was changed to 'Discussion Group' in Bejarano (1987)). The research team devoted a half a year to in-service training workshops with teachers in three schools in order to implement these techniques, so that the study's pre-test, validating classroom observations, and post-test were administered in the spring term (March through June).

Although some details are sketchy in the otherwise lengthy report (Sharan, 1984), the researchers' efforts to validate the treatment delivery through observation is noteworthy. Three independent and trained observers (interrater reliability reported at 85%) employed an adapted 20-item observation schedule (coding social interaction) in each of the experimental and control classes (n = 33) at two times about six weeks apart. At each observation, ratings were recorded in three 7-minute intervals spaced throughout the 45-minute periods. As reported in Sharan, Kussel, Sharan & Bejarano (1984b), these observations were checked to determine that at least one-third of the recorded observations in each experimental class (with two classes excepted) conformed to the social organisation behaviours expected for those techniques.

In order to appreciate the extent to which these observations were sensitive to the experimental training, however, a complete report should have included the precise categories observed and degree of differences in frequency of observations on those that supposedly discriminated between the three methods groups. For, besides these observations, no other discussion is presented to confirm that these classes in fact differed in just the methodologically prescribed ways and *not in other ways* (nor

that they did not differ in those ways prior to the training programme, although this possibility is rather unlikely under the circumstances). In other words, there needs to be a rather exhaustive treatment of the predictable variety of ways in which the classes could differ in terms of social interaction (cf. the theoretical, logical criterion in McCutcheon's (1981) argument), in order for there to be confidence in the different treatments as the causal factor. This would not be a very serious concern on the part of the critical reader if it were not for a rather extended discussion in Sharan *et al.* (1984b) explaining that the teachers in the ESL study were extremely resistant (to the point of 'rebellion') to the institution of the experimental techniques. 4

## Conclusion

The preceding analysis has been intended to clarify not only the problems and successes in use of L2 classroom observation, but to demonstrate the *necessity* of validation of these observations, as well as the subsequent need to validate instructional goals and efforts by means of such observations. That is, classroom research is not only of interest to professionals for its own sake, or because it might clarify learning processes, but its use is integral to the eventual success of any research concerned with effectiveness of instruction. The issues of validity that I have raised here are of course not the only sources of error and inadequate interpretation and generalisation of research findings; I would argue nonetheless, that increased attention to the employment of reliable, validated observation procedures and instruments will lead to substantially greater confidence in the findings of classroom research. Such applications are essential for us to document the course and success of language learning from instruction.

## Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Graham Crookes for valuable assistance in obtaining sources for this paper, and for his helpful comments on a first draft of the paper. Thanks also to Merrill Swain for suggestions.

## Notes

1. It is rare for L2 classroom researchers to assess the reliability of their instruments, much less other forms of validity. For more details on reliability

assessment in observation systems, see Frick & Semmel (1978), LeCompte & Goetz (1982), Page & Iwata (1986), and Chaudron (1988). For some exceptions to the rule of failure to determine reliability in L2 research see especially Mitchell, Parkinson, & Johnstone (1981), and Chaudron (1988: 24n.).

2. It is flawed in several analytical respects; see Chaudron (1988: 27).

3. Researchers are, however, limited by their lack' of responsibility for or involvement in the initial curriculum changes, so that they typically must accept wide programme-internal variations as a given. This problem was quite evident in the longitudinal bilingual education programme comparison conducted by Ramirez *et al.* (1986; cf. Chaudron (1988) for some discussion), in which a very detailed (and reliable) analysis of classroom speech act types demonstrated the same sort of intra-programme variability found in the COLT-based research (cf. also Nystrom, Stringfield and Miron's (1984) finding that bilingual education programme intentions were entirely unrealised, discussed in Chaudron (1988)).

4. There are in addition a variety of questions as to the relative success claimed by Bejarano (1987) for the experimental treatments over the control classes (Zhang, 1988), as measured by differential improvement in target language *receptive* skills. The results are rather complex, in that students of different proficiency levels appeared to improve at different rates depending on the specific treatment received (Sharan *et al.*, 1984a). The highest proficiency students appeared to benefit most from the experimental treatments, although no statistical interaction effect occurred. Furthermore, with regard to the construct validity of the experimental treatments themselves, George Jacobs and Ted Rodgers (personal communication) have pointed out the weakness of the descriptions of the two (especially the peer tutoring treatment) as representative of 'co-operative learning'. This matter would bring me into arguments of a more theoretical nature than is my intent in this paper.

## References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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What Have We Here?

Some Observations on the Influence of Instruction on L2 Learning

Patsy M. Lightbown

The influence of language teaching on language learning is the topic of considerable speculation and research. Some authors argue that while formal instruction may give learners conscious knowledge of some aspects of language which they may use under certain conditions, it does not affect the development of deep underlying grammatical competence which proceeds in essentially the same sequences regardless of the type of instruction learners receive (Felix, 1981; Krashen, 1982).

In contrast, other authors suggest that the eventual achievement of high levels of proficiency in a second language can be significantly aided by (Allen, Swain & Harley, 1988; Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson, 1984) or even depends on error correction and focus on specific aspects of the language in some orderly manner (Krashen & Seliger, 1975). Some specify further that focus on form is particularly crucial in the earliest stages of learning to prevent learners from levelling off at a stage of basic but inaccurate communication in the second language (Higgs & Clifford, 1982).

A third position is that, although 'consciousness raising' and form-focussed instruction in linguistic features are not strictly necessary for language acquisition, they can be helpful in speeding up the rate of development or in compensating for the low frequency or limited saliency

of certain linguistic features in the target language input to which learners would normally be exposed (Long, 1988; Rutherford, 1987a; 1987b). A related view is that of researchers who claim that the learning of some but not all linguistic features can be aided by focussed instruction. For example, Pienemann (1985) has given evidence that some aspects of the interlanguage system develop in inalterable sequences and that, while the learner's passage through these sequences can be speeded up by providing input which is appropriate to the learner's developmental stage, it is not helpful to provide learners with instruction related to aspects of the language which are beyond the hypothetical next stage in their development. On the other hand, Pienemann claims, there are 'variational features' of language which do not emerge in uniform developmental sequences and these features may be successfully taught at any time (Pienemann, 1985; see also Meisel, Clahsen & Pienemann, 1981). These features are said to develop in the learner's language as a function of his or her 'orientation' to the target language community, that is, to his or her desire (conscious or not) to conform to the norms of the target language.

A final view of the relationship between instruction and second language acquisition is that there are some features of the target language which learners may have to be taught because the relationship of their first language to the target language makes it virtually impossible for them to discover certain points of mismatch between their interlanguage and the target language (White, 1990). Her views are illustrated in Figure 15.1. White argues that 'positive evidence' (the existence of examples of the target structure in the input) will be sufficient for learners to acquire structures such as those designated Case 1 and Case 2A where learning the L2 implies learning 'something more'. However, when a particular feature exists in L1 and a similar feature exists in L2, the interlanguage may be too general. This leaves the learner in the position of having to discover that something which exists in L1 and in the interlanguage, does not, in fact, exist in L2, or at least, not in all the contexts in which it exists in L1.

White argues that, without focussed instruction, the learner cannot discover that his or her interlanguage is too general. She distinguishes between case 2B where there is a partial overlap between L1 and L2 and case 3 where the L1 and the learner's interlanguage are more general than the L2. White maintains that case 3 absolutely requires 'negative evidence', that is, some kind of feedback which alerts the learner to the error. For case 2B, it is hypothesised that learners may benefit from, but do not actually depend on, focussed instruction. On the other hand, it

*Case 1:* First language and interlanguage are less general than the target language. The existence of examples in the input will be sufficient to permit the learner to discover and acquire the feature.



*Case 2A:* First language and interlanguage have different features from those of the target language. The availability of evidence in the input will permit the L2 features to replace those in I.



*Case 2B:* There is a partial overlap between the first language, the interlanguage and the target language. The learner has to recognise that only those features represented by the shaded area are permissible and that those in the clear I area are not rules of the L2. Examples of the correct feature which must replace the I feature exist in the target language but may be difficult to perceive once the learner finds confirmation for features represented by the shaded area.



*Case 3:* The first language and the interlanguage contain features which are incorrect for the target language and for which there is no direct L2 replacement. Nothing in the positive evidence can inform the learner of this because the available input contains only the absence of the target feature. For this case, some kind of negative evidence or form-focussed instruction will be required.



Figure 15.1  
Relationships between First Language (L1), Interlanguage (I)  
and the Target Language (L2). Adapted from White (1990).

may be worked out in time, simply by the provision of positive evidence, that is, the existence of the new L2 form in the input.

In this paper, I will report on a somewhat unexpected finding in classroom observation research which provides support for the usefulness of form-focussed language teaching for a 2B type of structure. The research was carried out in ESL classes which were essentially 'communicative', that is, classes in which the principal objective of the teacher was to provide opportunities for students to engage in language use in situations where the focus was on the exchange of information rather than on the presentation and practice of linguistic features. The observational study was carried out as one part of a large-scale study of the learning of English as a second language by French-speaking students in the province of Quebec in Canada (Spada & Lightbown, 1989). The linguistic feature which is the focus of this observation is the English presentational or introducer form 'there is'. The French equivalent of 'there is' is *il y a*, literally 'it has there'. English also permits the verb have in presentational structures such as 'we have here a . . .' or 'over here you have a . . .'.

There are certain stylistic and contextual constraints on the 'have' and 'be' structures. In some contexts, either would be acceptable; in others, one or the other may be stylistically inappropriate. In general, however, the *il y a* form dominates in French; the 'there is' form dominates in English.

I will begin by reviewing published findings from earlier observational research which form the background for this paper. Then, following a presentation of the new observational findings, I will discuss the findings in terms of the points of view regarding the relationship between form-focussed language teaching and language learning presented above, and propose some further experimental research which could provide support for one or another of these points of view.

### Previous Findings

In a study of the acquisition of English L2 by French-speaking children and adolescents (12 to 17 years of age) whose principal exposure to English was in English as a second language classes which were based on presentation, practice and drill techniques of audio-lingual approaches to L2 teaching, I observed that many students tended to use 'have' rather than 'be' in presentational or introducer forms (Lightbown, 1984b; 1987a). For example, in a picture description task, students would begin their descriptions by saying 'You have a boy who sit at a desk'. As noted



above, such a presentational form can also be found in the speech of native speakers. Thus, it may be what Corder (1971) would call a 'covert' error. That is, although the form does not appear to be incorrect in itself, the learners' use of it is based on an underlying interlanguage system which is not the same as that which underlies native speakers' use of the structure. This is shown by several further observations. First, learners used subject pronouns for this structure which native speakers would never use. For example, they might say 'He has a boy . . .' or 'It has a boy . . .', or they might even use the verb with no subject pronoun at all, for example, 'Have a girl with three balloon'. (For purposes of this discussion, I leave aside as irrelevant the fact that students often failed to use correct verb agreement for person and number, 'It have . . .'; 'He have . . .'.) Further, many students used these forms exclusively, never using the 'there is' form as an alternative. A comparison group of native speakers of the same age as the L2 subjects performed the same picture description task. In their speech, 'there is' (actually 'there's') accounted for nearly 75% of the introducer forms; 'it's' accounted for just under 15% of the introducers and variations of 'have' accounted for less than 1%.

For most groups of second language learners in the earlier study, 'have' accounted for about 30% of the introducers; 'it's' accounted for another 30%; and 'there's' accounted for as little as 18% and as much as 30%. The only exception to this pattern was observed among the youngest group of learners. The youngest group were students in grade 6 (11-12 years old) who had just completed their second or third year of two hours per week of instruction in ESL. This was the only group for which 'have' introducers represented only a tiny percentage (2%) of the introducer forms used.

Detailed analysis of classroom language and the textbooks used in their classes provided a very straightforward explanation for this observation. Not only had these students spent many hours specifically practicing and drilling the use of 'there's' as an introducer, it was also the case that the verb 'have' had never been introduced in their textbook or in the instruction which they received in class. Indeed, the 2% of introducers accounted for by 'have' were produced by the very small number of students who had had some exposure to English outside the classroom. The majority of the students simply did not know the verb and thus never used it. Because the study was longitudinal, however, it was possible to observe what happened when, in grade 7, the students were exposed to the verb for the first time. By the end of grade 7, 'have' accounted for 21% of students' introducer forms. They still used 'there's'

more frequently, but the cross-sectional results from the older secondary students suggest that, by grade 8 or 10, 'have' would come to be as frequent as 'there's' and that 'it's' would account for another third of the introducers.

In the previous research reports (Lightbown, 1984b; 1987a), several possible explanations were offered for the high frequency of 'have' used as an introducer. First it was observed that one French-speaking ESL teacher to whom all the secondary students had been exposed for one year of their ESL instruction, also made very frequent use of this form. His use was always correct and native-like, but differed from native speaker usage in that he tended to use 'have' with dramatically higher frequency than native speakers. All the other teachers in the study whether native speakers of English or other second language speakers used 'have' introducers far less frequently, although the francophone teachers tended to use it more than the anglophones. It was hypothesised that teacher input could have influenced students' use of the form.

A second possible explanation was that students, once they had learned the verb 'have', simply assumed that it could be used in English in all contexts where *avoir*, its translation equivalent, could be used in French. At the time of publication of the previous findings, we had not obtained comparison data from French-speaking students carrying out a picture description task in French. In subsequent research, such data have been collected and it has been confirmed that students do overwhelmingly use some form of *avoir* (most often a variant of *il y a*, literally, 'it has there') as the preferred introducer form.

Further anecdotal evidence supporting the transfer of *il y a* is in the following exchange between a research assistant and a student performing the picture description task for the first time. The student, a subject in the new research study to be reported below, was receiving ESL instruction in a regular ESL programme, that is, two hours per week of 'communicative' activities.

Student: A person draw the picture.

R.A.: Mmhm.

Student: And uh, he has a jack a red jacket.

R.A.: OK, very good.

Student: And uh blue pants.

R.A.: Right, good.

Student: The in next to how do you say *il y a*?

R.A.: There is.

Student: There is one desk.

R.A.: Good, right.

Student: On one d on the desk there is one book. In the in the back there is a person. He has a brown jacket.

Later in the task following many repetitions of 'there is':

Student: . . . and next to I have uh there is one boy play uh make bicycle.

In addition to the input availability of 'have' as an introducer and the existence of the L1 translation equivalent of this form, it was noted in the previous reports that confusion of 'be' and 'have' is observed among learners from many language backgrounds. Furthermore, there are many languages which do not have separate verbs for the meanings which English expresses by these two verbs. It would probably be incorrect, therefore, to consider the 'have' introducer form in these learners' language as being caused simply by transfer from L1 or simply by input features. Rather, it seems likely that some complex interaction among several factors led to the stability of this structure in their interlanguage. What is quite clear, however, and the point which serves as important background for the new observational findings which will be reported below, is the fact that the long period of intensive drill and practice which led to the use of 'there's' in the speech of the grade 6 learners in the previous study, did not prevent these same learners from using 'have' as an introducer as soon as they had their first exposure to this verb.

The research reported above was carried out in ESL classes where teachers followed a fairly strict audio-lingual approach to teaching. It was assumed that learners should be exposed to the language in small steps, that each feature which was presented should be practiced until students had mastered it, and then another feature could be safely introduced. The language teaching situation in Quebec has changed dramatically since that time. The Ministry of Education has recommended a very different teaching methodology which emphasises exposing learners to a great deal more language than they are expected to 'master', encouraging students to try to express themselves using whatever language they have learned. Students are not expected to produce error-free language in class, but to try to make themselves understood in situations which call for a genuine exchange of information. The new syllabus is based on language functions rather than language forms. In other words, teachers teach, and students are expected to learn, not specific grammatical forms, but language for use in a variety of situations. It is in this context that the new observations reported below were made.

## New Observations

In an ongoing research project, we are following the English L2 development of students who are enrolled in an intensive ESL course for five months half of the school year in either grade 5 (age 10 years) or grade 6 (age 11 years) (Spada & Lightbown, 1989). These students, similar in most respects to the students who were subjects of the research reported above, differ dramatically from them in the type of ESL instruction they receive. There are two important differences. First, as noted above, the pedagogical approach has greatly changed. Students are now exposed to what is generally referred to as 'communicative language teaching' and teachers are far more concerned with students' ability to comprehend and produce some genuine information in English than with their production of perfect sentences based on a well-practiced model. The second difference is in the very different amount of time which is devoted to ESL instruction. Students in these new experimental intensive programmes get four to five hours a day of instruction over a five-month period (in either grade 5 or grade 6) whereas students in the programmes described above (as well as most students studying ESL in Quebec's French-medium schools currently) have two hours or less of instruction per week.

In spite of these differences, some things are very much the same. Students have little contact with English outside their classroom environment. They have vaguely positive attitudes toward learning English, but do not find many opportunities or needs to use it in their daily lives except in watching English television. Most students have their first exposure to English in grade 4 or grade 5. Thus, when they enter the intensive ESL course, they have accumulated only about 50 (grade 5) to 100 (grade 6) hours of instruction in English, and their knowledge of English is extremely limited. In both the intensive courses and the regular ESL courses, most teachers of English are not native speakers, and they represent a wide range of proficiency in the language.

One type of data collection which we have used in the ongoing study is the same picture description task which we used in the study reported above. In this task, learners describe one of a set of pictures to an interviewer who is seated across the table from the student and cannot see the student's picture. The interviewer has four pictures arrayed in front of her, one of which is identical to the student's picture. The other three differ in various details. The student's task is to describe the picture in sufficient detail to enable the interviewer to correctly guess which one

the student is describing. (For further details of the task, see Lightbown & Spada, 1978; 1987).

We have now collected data from several hundred students who have participated in the experimental intensive ESL programmes. Not surprisingly, we have found that students in these courses outperform students in the regular programmes on virtually all measures. Even when they are compared with older students (grade 9 or 10) whose accumulated amount of ESL instruction is comparable (some 450 hours), students from the intensive course do better on tests of listening comprehension, are more fluent in English and tend to have both a richer vocabulary and better communication strategies for dealing with gaps in their vocabulary.

In terms of grammatical accuracy, however, there are some areas where students in the new experimental programmes show weakness. Although they tend to produce some quite complex sentences, these sentences are often lacking in grammatical morphology. For example, there are many sentences such as the following in the data: 'The girl who look out the door to see if the teacher come has brown shorts'. The types of errors made by these students were generally the same ones which were familiar from the analyses we had done of students in the audio-lingual programmes. After a comparable number of hours of instruction, however, the students in the experimental programmes tended to make more of these local grammatical errors.

One of the characteristics of the learners' language which very quickly caught our attention was the use of 'have' as an introducer. There was essentially no difference between these students and those we had previously studied. Whether their teachers were native speakers of English or francophones, most students tended to use 'have' rather than 'be' as an introducer. When they did use 'be', they were more likely to use 'it's' than 'there's'. The former was usually completely acceptable, but it is also to be noted that, like 'have', it may be based on a translation equivalent from French (in this case, *c'est*) which would be an appropriate presentational or introducer form.

The results of a quantitative analysis of the distribution of introducer forms used by students in four intensive ESL classes (two grade 5 and two grade 6) are shown in Table 15.1. It is clear that, in three classes (5A, 6A, and 6B), the two most frequent introducer forms for all classes were 'have' and 'it's'. The findings for these classes are typical of those we have observed in students from the old audio-lingual classes as well as those in more than thirty other classes of grade 5 and grade 6 learners

TABLE 15.1  
*Number of students using each of the most frequently used  
introducer types*

	Grade 5		Grade 6	
	5A N = 28	5B N = 28	6A N = 30	6B N = 29
There is	4	19	2	8
It's	25	17	15	17
Is*	2	13	3	14
You have	14	1	15	8
We have	14	4	20	9
Have*	15	5	14	12
I see	9	0	3	0

\*With no subject pronoun.

in the intensive programmes. Thus, when I reviewed the transcripts from the class identified in Table 15.1 as 5B, in which the use of 'have' as an introducer was virtually absent, I was very surprised. There were only four students in this class who preferred 'have' and of these only two never used 'be' forms. This was a striking contrast to the pattern observed in virtually all other classes where most students preferred 'have' and many used it exclusively.

When my initial impressions of group differences had been verified by a quantitative analysis, I was eager to review the reports of the classroom interaction observations which were being done as part of the research project and to talk with the teacher about her treatment of the introducer forms as a topic for focussed instruction in class.

The review of the classroom interaction observations revealed that this teacher was one of the teachers in these basically 'communicative' classes who had placed the greatest emphasis on form-focussed instruction (Lightbown & Spada, 1990). She had spent more time than most of the other teachers in drawing students' attention to matters of grammar, vocabulary, or usage. However, the total amount of class time which she devoted to such activities amounted to less than 30% of observed class time. The remaining time was devoted to a wide variety of communicative and interactive activities and classroom management. It is also important to point out that, although she emphasised other grammatical points in her teaching (the marking of plural -s, for example), the influence of instruction did not manifest itself as dramatically (Lightbown & Spada, 1990).

When I had an opportunity to speak to the teacher specifically about the introducers, I asked in what I considered a neutral tone whether she had taught her students 'there is' and 'there are'. There was nothing neutral about her response. 'You bet I did,' she said. 'I drummed it into their little heads! I got so tired of hearing "you have a this" and "you have a that" that every time somebody said "you have . . .," I said, "I do? Where.?"' This rather passionate speech was accompanied by much paralinguistic demonstration in which the teacher showed how she would pretend to search in her hands and behind her back for whatever it was the student had said she 'had'.

This corrective behaviour was very different from what we observed in most of the classroom interaction in which this teacher and others generally engaged. And, indeed, so were the results obtained for her students on this particular point which she had selected for such attention. Another way in which the group of students in 5B differed from the others was that the absence of 'have' as introducer was virtually universal. In the other classes, students who used 'have' less frequently than most tended to be the students with the most advanced language ability as measured by both test scores and other measures of accuracy and fluency in oral performance. Table 15.2 shows the relationship between post-test (at the end of five months of intensive ESL) scores on a general listening comprehension test, and the use of the various introducers by ten students from each of the classes for whom the group results are shown in Table 15.1. It can be seen that it is only in class 5B that there is no correlation between test performance and the use of 'have' as introducer. Furthermore, in this class, 'developmental stage' was not a predictor of success in learning this particular aspect of the language. (See Lightbown (in preparation) for detailed discussion of the analyses of learners' developmental stage in terms of the stages for English L2 development proposed by Pienemann & Johnston (1986) and updated by Pienemann, Johnston & Brindley (1988)).

These observations led to questions about why this feature of English has posed such universal difficulty for hundreds of other students we have observed and why it appeared to have been so successfully taught in this class. It is useful to return to White's (1990) hypothesis which was referred to above (see Figure 15.1). The use of 'have' for 'be' is an example of Case 2B, a partial overlap between L1, L2, and interlanguage. The use of 'have' and 'it's' as introducers falls in the shaded area of overlap, but learners need to become aware of 'there is' as an introducer, a structure which is in L2 but not in L1 or the overlap area. The problem should not be as serious as the one in Case 3 because positive evidence



TABLE 15.2  
Comparison of listening comprehension test results and use of 'be' and 'have' introducers (as a percentage) by ten students in each of four intensive ESL classes

Grade 5						Grade 6					
Score	5A	Be	Have	Score	5B	Be	Have	Score	6B	Be	Have
	%		%		%		%		%		%
High-scoring students											
74	47	47	83	100	0	92	33	67	98	87	13
74	53	35	83	100	0	89	33	33	96	27	73
70	100	0	77	97	3	89	100	0	96	0	100
64	35	65	75	100	0	87	100	0	94	100	0
62	8	92	74	86	14	87	100	0	89	100	0
Low-scoring students											
42	55	45	42	100	0	49	50	50	42	6	94
42	47	53	47	100	0	49	22	78	51	17	83
43	23	77	47	100	0	51	5	95	55	0	0
43	28	72	47	100	0	47	0	100	60	15	85
45	10	90	44	100	0	55	20	80	62	0	100

Note: The 'score' is a percentage score on a test of global listening comprehension.

in the input should allow learners to escape from their interlanguage toward L2. On the other hand, since the students are in classes which are strictly homogeneous for native language, they tend to get masses of non-native input which will tend to confirm their own interlanguage hypotheses. Thus, although 'positive evidence' is available in theory, it is safe to say that it is fairly rare and that the interlanguage form 'have' and the correct, but overused, form 'it's' are heard almost exclusively. If, as was usually the case in these classes, teachers did not offer correction of errors, students were quite unlikely ever to discover for themselves that 'have' was not only not the preferred form, but was sometimes simply incorrect. Students depended on the teacher as the only source of the positive evidence required to get them out of an overgeneralised rule about the translation equivalence of 'be' and 'have' in French and English introducer forms.

It is interesting to compare the knowledge and use of the introducer forms by the 'successful' group of intensive programme students to that of the students in the previous research who had had hours of practice and drill with 'there is' and then shifted to 'have' as soon as they learned it. It would seem reasonable to infer that for the latter students, the isolated practice of a form which was not used in contrast to any other

form had a different interlanguage status from something which was learned in a situation of immediate use. In the 'successful' intensive programme class, the situations in which the teacher drew students' attention to their be/have error were precisely those situations in which the students knew what they wanted to say and the teacher's interventions made clear to them that there was a particular way to say it.

It is important to ask why form-focussed teaching of this particular structure seemed to 'work' when there is no evidence that it was successful for other structures which the teacher remembered giving attention to, albeit somewhat less emphatically than the 'there is' introducer. All teachers are familiar with situations in which they have taught something in a meaningful context, using the most up-to-date techniques and the greatest possible consistency, only to have students leave the classroom and fall again into using the erroneous form. The explanation for this would appear to lie in the hypothesis proposed by Corder, Krashen and others, and operationalised (at least partially) by Pienemann: that it is possible to teach only those things which the learner is able to learn. According to Pienemann, a learner is able to learn (1) aspects of the language which are acquired in developmental sequence if they are at the learner's potential next level of development, and (2) variational features which can be learned at any time if the learner is motivated to learn them. The fact that all learners in class 5B, regardless of proficiency scores or developmental level, were able to learn this feature suggests that it would fall into the class of variational features. That is, even though the overall tendency among francophone students was for only those who were the 'best language learners' to acquire this form, students in 5B whose general performance was poor learned it in the context of the teacher's success in making it highly desirable to do so!

A final question raised by these observational findings, of course, is 'What happened next?' Did students who successfully learned the form in grade 5 forget it the following year? Did students who had not learned it in the grade 5 or 6 intensive learn it the following year without any special teaching? Was there further evidence that only the most successful learners would be able to master this structure without special help? One year after the data elicitation which yielded the above results, we were able to re-interview ten students from each of the grade 5 classes ten from the group which had been intensively taught the feature and ten from the group which had not had the same sustained instruction on this form. (In fact, the 5A teacher had, near the very end of the year, noticed the ubiquity of the 'have' introducer and made a few corrections, but had not made a major teaching point of it over an extended period as

TABLE 15.3  
*Frequency of 'be' and 'have' as introducers in ten students' speech at the end of grade 5 and one year later*

June 1987		June 1988	
Be %	Have %	Be %	Have %
<i>High-scoring students in class 5A</i>			
47	47	11	0
53	35	100	0
100	0	100	0
35	65	50	50
8	92	14	84
<i>High-scoring students in class 5B</i>			
100	0	100	0
100	0	100	0
97	3	0	100
100	0	100	0
86	14	20	80
<i>Low-scoring students in class 5A</i>			
55	45	0	100
47	53	0	100
23	77	14	86
28	72	0	100
10	90	0	100
<i>Low-scoring students in class 5B</i>			
100	0	100	0
100	0	100	0
100	0	67	33
100	0	100	0
100	0	100	0

the 5B teacher had done.) The results of this follow-up observation are shown in Table 15.3. All but one of the nine students (eight from 5B and one from 5A) who had used 'be' introducers exclusively in grade 5 continued to do so in grade 6. Two high scoring students from 5B (the only two in that group who did not use 'be' exclusively at the end of grade 5) show a dramatic increase in the tendency to use 'have' in grade 6. One high-scoring student from class 5A increased his use of 'be'. Seven of the remaining students kept their 'have' preference and, in several cases, even increased it dramatically. One student had an almost exclusive use of 'I see' as an introducer, with a single case of 'be' ('it's').

These results tend to confirm the inferences stated above: when a

feature which is within learners' margin of learnability (either one which is developmentally appropriate, or as in this case, a 'variational' feature, in Pienemann's terms) is consistently taught, the effect of the teaching can be sustained. I would suggest, furthermore, that the success of the teaching may also have been due to the fact that students were offered the specific instruction in a context where the emphasis was on helping them to say what they themselves had already decided to say. This is in contrast with the short term effects of the isolated learning of structures in an audio-lingual structure-based programme and with the ineffectiveness of teaching features which are beyond learners' current developmental capacity.

### Conclusions and Proposals for Future Research

A *post hoc* analysis of observations is at best a first step in testing the hypotheses implied by the views of language learning and teaching which were introduced at the beginning of this paper. Nevertheless, the observational research reported here can be interpreted tentatively as support for views of language learning which include a significant role for form-focussed instruction. A number of researchers have recently begun to undertake some pedagogical experiments, attempting to teach some aspect of language to second language learners. Some of the experimental research has drawn on one or another version of linguistic markedness theory as the basis for choosing the structures to be taught (Gass, 1982; Zobl, 1985). In some cases, the choice of what to teach has been arrived at by an analysis of linguistic features which fairly advanced learners continue to find difficult (Harley, 1989). Other researchers are choosing to emphasise the teaching of linguistic structures which are believed to represent an appropriate developmental stage (Pienemann, 1987). Such experiments are of great importance in determining not only what the role of form-focussed instruction may be in language learning, but also in assessing the present state of the potential for application of language acquisition research in classroom teaching.

In experimental studies which are now being undertaken, we intend to investigate these issues further. These studies will involve students in intensive English classes similar to those which were the subject of the observational studies described in this paper. The research will include a base-line assessment to determine learners' developmental level on specific features (e.g. the formation of interrogative sentences), an instructional component which will include both the target developmental feature and a variational feature (such as be/have introducers), and a post-test to

evaluate the effects of the instructional component on learners' knowledge and use of the target structures. Comparison groups receiving instruction in other features of the language will be included in the study design. We hope that such focussed experimental studies will lead toward a better understanding of the role of language teaching in language learning.

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#### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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## Introduction

This paper is concerned with the role of the teacher in classroom language learning. I wish to explore the teacher's contribution with reference to two questions: Why do teachers do what they do during lessons? and Why is it important to know why teachers do what they do? I will describe and discuss the reasons given by 106 experienced language teachers for a range of teaching behaviours which they adopted or perceived adopted in language classes. My wish is to raise a number of issues which may complement current classroom-oriented research and to provide a particular perspective for colleagues concerned with teacher development.

When I was invited to contribute to this memorial volume in honour of Claus Færch, I was strongly reminded of a particular seminar he offered to our postgraduate students at Lancaster in the summer of 1983. Participants enthusiastically engaged in a high level discussion of learning strategies for more than two hours. The significance of this event for me was the way in which Claus orchestrated the interplay of everyone's ideas. I was witnessing a craftsman teacher at work, and I learned much from him that day that has influenced my own teaching ever since. I wondered, at the time, what specific plan lay behind how he worked and what principles he followed. I regret never asking him then. This paper tries to tap into such things in the belief that the mere description of effective teaching' is partial. We need to explain good teaching to uncover the reasons that motivate and sustain it.

## From Description to Understanding

The retreat from research on teaching methodology since the 1960s is now well documented, and observational studies of aspects of the interaction between teachers and learners are currently typical in classroom oriented investigation. <sup>1</sup> This focus may be seen as almost a reaction against the earlier large-scale method studies, and it represents a search for descriptive integrity as a necessary preliminary to prescriptive deduction (Allwright, 1972; 1988). However, much contemporary research in the language classroom is also an extension of one of the major preoccupations of language education in the 1970s and 1980s: the learner and, particularly, the learning process. The period has witnessed something of a pedagogic revolution during which theoretical and practical impetus has been given to individualised and self-directed instruction, to the facilitation of learner autonomy, and to the more direct engagement of the learner in the classroom process. Such innovations have only occasionally brushed shoulders with research. Where it has, the study of second language acquisition has provided a wealth of insights concerning the learning process and the strategic behaviour of learners. Its contribution to pedagogy, however, might be fairly described as circumspect. As Lightbown (1987c) reminds us, there are good reasons for this, not least that the researcher will often pursue investigation of the learning process in ways that seek to curtail the very complexity of conditions within which everyday classroom language learning occurs. In approaching the classroom as the arena in which to test hypotheses from second language acquisition, the researcher is confronted with a paradox. How to confirm a psychological theory when subjects are participating in a demanding and engaging social event?

Proposals for effective teaching are at least implicit in mainstream research, and requirements upon the teacher are complex yet delimited. A central implication entails the provision of linguistic input which is finely tuned to just above the present levels of understanding of the learners. This provision may be best supplemented by setting learners tasks which generate a level of conversational negotiation to the extent that learners will achieve this fine tuning for themselves. Research on learning strategies implies that the teacher may adopt a complementary role by helping learners to develop ways of working which may facilitate the comprehension of input. These are important ideas, although we are not yet sure why it is that the learner's comprehending of classroom language seems to do the trick. More significantly, we still need to explain *how* learners make sense of this language in the first place as a basis for



uptake and learning. Classroom oriented research focusses upon the explicit interaction between participants in lessons. The researcher tries to be true to what is observable but, in seeking to account for unobservable comprehension, is obliged to have faith in causality. The researcher has to infer *beyond* the coincidence of certain discourse variables with results from tests of learning outcomes.

Whilst it is obviously crucial to endeavour to confirm the claims of language acquisition research by checking their resilience to classroom conditions, it remains necessary to complement such work by exploring other influential forces within these conditions. If we seek to explain how learning is done in a classroom, part of our explanation will relate to the *sense* made by learners of not only what is taught but also how it is taught. This semantic level of classroom interaction may not be revealed to us if we only study the surface talk of teacher and learners. In fact, the meaning which participants give to classroom life may be deliberately hidden or even suppressed by the discourse itself. 2 Researching classroom language learning therefore seems to involve us in discovering the understandings which teachers and learners invest in, and derive from, classroom work. I will enlarge on this claim by referring specifically to the teaching process.

### Teaching as a Meaning-Making Activity

Consider a situation in which a teacher is required to work with a new class of multi-lingual adults who are beginners in the target language. The teaching will have to be done, of course, within a limited number of class hours. Aware of these and other constraints, the teacher's experience will also allow the anticipation of certain features of the coming lessons. Such dynamic features are the contingencies which will shape the work with the learners as it proceeds. This 'complex' of constraints and anticipated contingencies will be defined by the teacher as a specific problem to be dealt with in certain ways. And, crucially, even before entering the first lesson, the teacher will have problematised the situation with direct reference to a personal conceptualisation of the teaching-learning process. This implicit theory also provides the teacher with a rationale for what is subsequently *done* in the lessons which follow. The teacher's implicit theory entails a set of justifications for action in the classroom; the theory overlays what may be observable in that classroom with a particular interpretation. The teacher is not alone in acting and justifying action on the basis of a personal theory. Learners approach lessons in this way and so do researchers, of course.

When teacher and learners work together in order to make the situation manageable, they seek an equilibrium between what may be quite diverse implicit theories of the teaching-learning process. Although at least the teacher's set of justifications for what is done in the class might be explicitly shared, the learners will make sense of classroom activity through their own theories. What all parties undertake, however, is the gradual establishment of a structure within which co-operative endeavour can take place. Their diverse theories become *routinised* through overt classroom discourse and procedures. And the structure teacher and learners seek is consolidated by these routines. In essence, what is jointly created is a culture where overt routines virtually *have* to exist in order that the multiplicity of meanings and values which participants give to their own actions and those of others can be contained and naturalised. The proof of this search for equilibrium' through structure and routine comes with disruption or change. When something happens in the classroom or some innovation is proposed which challenges what has been gradually and jointly established, resistance is expressed precisely with reference to the set of justifications embedded within the implicit theories of those who wish to stay put. In other words, what is under the surface of classroom life reveals itself when the particular scaffolding of routine is shaken.

If we study only the discourse of lessons we will have access to the routines. The discourse is merely symptom and symbol of an underlying culture. I have tried to explain and illustrate this phenomenon elsewhere (Breen, 1985). If we wish to research the understandings teacher and learners give to and take from classroom interaction, we are obliged to investigate this culture. Learning a language in class does not happen from the discourse or procedures but *through* the meanings given to them by learners through their rationale for what they are doing within the classroom structure. These implicit theories at the semantic and cultural level of classroom interaction are the perceptual and conceptual filters through which classroom language is rendered comprehensible.

What might be the nature of these implicit theories? What do they contain? My wish is to illustrate their nature from data obtained from 106 experienced teachers who participated in a language teaching and learning experiment at the University of Lancaster. The experiment required them to enter the situation confronting the teacher described at the opening of this section. The study itself sought to meet Politzer's (1981) challenge that:

Ethnographic research leading to *understanding the cultural processes of second language teaching and learning* and a resulting increase in second language teaching efficiency should be among the attainable goals of the 1980's. (Politzer, 1981:30 my emphasis)

The study is also in the recently emergent tradition of investigations of teachers' thinking and decision-making which are beginning to influence interesting approaches to the perspectives of the language teacher. 3

### Reasons Teachers Give for Teaching Techniques

The data on the implicit theories of the 106 teachers who took part in the experiment derive from participant accounts of 42 language lessons undertaken by 21 small groups. As part of the broader experiment, the informants made written records of the techniques they adopted or perceived adopted and, as part of these records, provided reasons why the teachers behaved in the ways they did. The search for the set of justifications this particular group of experienced language teachers shared with regard to classroom action was not an explicitly identified objective of the experiment. The teachers were informed that the purposes of the experiment were to participate in a language learning experience and to keep written records of different aspects of that experience. Only after the experiment did each informant discover that they had all made written records of and offered their own reasons for the particular teaching techniques they had used or perceived during two lessons.

### The Informants

The teachers participating in this study had all received some form of initial training and had at least three years' experience, most of them teaching adults and tertiary level students with about a third having experience at primary and secondary levels. (The average teaching experience was seven years.) Of the whole group, almost equally men and women, 47 were British and had each taught in at least two overseas countries, eight came from English-speaking countries outside Britain, and 51 came from thirty overseas countries and were native speakers of more than twenty different languages as well as being fluent in English. In all, they represented a relatively well experienced and informed group of language teachers just under half of whom were from overseas.<sup>4</sup>

## The Procedure

As a contributory part of their studies of language learning, the teachers were asked to participate in a language learning experience with a view to learning as much of a new language that they could manage within a particular method of time. As part of this experience, they would be advised at certain times to make written records of certain aspects of their work. They were asked to choose any language they would like to begin to learn that was already known by at least two other colleagues. Small groups were subsequently formed in which two members were native speakers or fluent in the chosen language and at least three members were genuine beginners in that language. Over the full period of the experiment, 21 groups were formed in this way representing eight different languages which were worked on by more than sixty learners. The two native-speaking/fluent group members were asked to choose one of two roles: either to act as 'knower' or 'informant' concerning the language and to help the learners begin to work on it, or to serve as a non-participating observer of the group during their work together. Table 16.1 summarises the composition of the different groups.

All groups worked in outwardly similar classroom conditions and were given the same instructions throughout the period of the experiment. An initial problem-solving task was undertaken so that: (i) all group members could become familiar with working together on the new language; (ii) native/fluent speakers could subsequently decide whether they would be more comfortable in 'teacher' or 'observer' roles for the main experiment; and (iii) 'teacher' and 'learners' could, on the basis of this warm up task, agree together on appropriate objectives for the actual lessons to come. Groups subsequently followed through a series of lessons each timetabled to last three-quarters of an hour (there were two lessons on each day of the experiment). Before each lesson, all groups met in a plenary in which they were told that they would be asked to keep a written record of a particular aspect of their work. They were not told in advance what this aspect would be, but were given individual instruction sheets which they were urged for the sake of the experiment had to remain confidential to each individual until the series of lessons was complete. These instruction sheets reiterated the explicit purposes of the experiment and their own chosen role within it. Individuals were further instructed when, in relation to lesson times, they should read and follow attached further instructions that would advise them on which aspect of the lesson they should make a written record and how they should compile it.

TABLE 16.1  
The 21 language learning groups

Language Taught	Country of Teacher	Origin of the Participants Learners	Observer
Arabic	Israel	Australia, Britain (2)	Morocco
Arabic	Morocco	Britain, Ethiopia, S. Africa	Morocco
Arabic	Morocco	Britain (2), Hong Kong, Ireland, Togo	Britain
Chinese	China	Britain (3)	Britain
Chinese	China	Britain (2)*	China
French	Britain	Hong Kong, India, Thailand	Britain
French	Britain	Indonesia, Sudan, Thailand	Britain
French	Britain	China, Pakistan, Malaya	Britain
German	Switzerland	Britain (2), Burma	Britain
German	Britain	China, Togo, Zaire	Britain
Indonesian	Britain	Britain (2)*	Britain
Italian	Britain	Britain, India, New Zealand	Britain
Kiswahili	Tanzania	Britain, Canada, S. Africa	Tanzania
Kiswahili	Tanzania	Britain (3), S. Africa	Kenya
Kiswahili	Tanzania	Britain (2), Burma, China	Zaire
Spanish	Ecuador	Britain (2), Burma	Peru
Spanish	Spain	Britain (2), Uganda	Britain
Spanish	Chile	Korea, S. Africa (2)	Britain
Spanish	Chile	Britain, India*	Brazil
Spanish	Venezuela	Britain, China, Turkey	Spain
Spanish	Britain	Burma, Togo, Zaire	Britain

\*Data from the third learner in these groups not included in the sample because of absence in the second lesson.

The Data

The data described in this paper derive from the first and third lessons of the series. They come from a total of 42 lessons representing 31 1/2 hours of class time. Immediately at the end of each of these lessons both teachers and learners in the groups were given at least half an hour to write individual and confidential records identifying *the specific techniques adopted by the teacher* during the lesson. Individual teachers were asked to write down 'all those things you did to help your learners with the new language' whilst individual learners were asked to recall and write down all the things that their 'teacher' did in order to help them. 5 Both were further asked to give their own *reasons* for the teacher's techniques to state *why* they believed each technique had been adopted alongside each technique as they identified it. The observers, on the other hand, were also given a set of confidential instructions

immediately before each of the lessons. They were asked to make a written record as the lesson progressed of each thing the teacher did to help the learners. Observers were required to identify teaching techniques as they occurred, and the moment they recorded a technique they were required to write alongside it the reason(s) they believed it had been adopted by the teacher.

Whilst informants may have anticipated the focus on teaching techniques by the third lesson, they had no idea of this focus in the first (other lessons focussed on different phenomena). Once the full series of lessons was completed, teachers and observers were asked to compile individual overall accounts of all the techniques they adopted or perceived adopted in the two lessons. Their accounts ranked techniques in order of frequency and alongside each description of a technique they wrote out all the reasons they had originally offered for it. The learners from each language group were asked to compile together a single account which represented a synthesis of their individual records from both lessons. (This was done, first, to make subsequent sharing and discussion of the data manageable given the relatively large number of learner informants and, second, so that comparisons could be made between teacher, observer, and learner accounts.) Each group of learners was given more than four days to compile accounts and they were asked to rank teacher techniques in order from those recorded by all learners in the group down to those recorded only by individuals. They were required to write alongside each technique *all* the reasons they had originally provided for it. At this overview accounts stage, all informants were asked to change the wording of anything they had originally written during or after each lesson *only* if a clearer description of a technique or a reason could be provided to a potential reader of the accounts. Only the learners discovered that teaching techniques had been the focus of the two lessons before final accounts were multicopied for circulation and discussion during a plenary meeting of all informants. That they had all kept records of teaching techniques in the same lessons did not become clear to teacher, learner, and observer groupings until accounts were exchanged and discussed.

The data therefore represent the immediate written recall or observation of specific teaching techniques adopted or perceived to be adopted by 21 experienced language teachers of multinational origin teaching eight different foreign languages. The data include 21 self-reports by the teachers, 21 compiled accounts from 64 learners, and 21 accounts from observers. The data also provide *particular* answers to the question: Why do teachers do what they do? And these answers can be found in

the reasons this particular group of teachers gave for all the techniques they assumed to have been used in early lessons with beginning learners.

### *The Analysis*

The central concern in the present paper is not the techniques themselves but what 63 separate accounts from the perspectives of teacher, learner, and observer can tell us about the rationale for teaching behaviour that experienced language teachers may share. The analysis of the data therefore aimed to discover whether there existed a consensus of justifications and what implicit theory of the teaching-learning process was collectively represented by this group of teachers. Although our present focus is upon the reasons that participants gave for techniques, important preliminary points need to be made concerning the relationship in the data between techniques identified and reasons offered. The accounts, taken separately, specified more than seven hundred techniques. 6 Although teacher, learners and observer might describe different techniques even in the same lesson, all three types of informant often identified common techniques. Therefore the perceived techniques can be reduced to a finite though diverse range. A content analysis was applied to all reasons for techniques in all 63 accounts, and they were subsequently quantified in a similar way to the techniques. Each separate reason in each account was included in the overall quantification. If the same reason was used to justify a different technique, it was only counted once. This procedure identified just over a thousand reasons from the separate accounts.

The data reveal, as we might expect, different reasons being offered for the same technique, not only by a number of informants but even by a single informant in a single account. Conversely, the same reason was given for different techniques, again by several informants and even in a single account. Only occasionally was there agreement between informants on the correspondence between a particular technique and the reasons attributed to it. In essence, there was not a clear consistency across informants' accounts concerning the relationship between a technique and the justifications provided for its use. We might deduce from this that the teachers participating in the investigation not only used or perceived a relatively finite set of teaching behaviours, but also attributed to these behaviours sets of justifications which expressed individually different implicit theories. In other words, whilst one teacher will attach a particular set of beliefs and values to an instance of classroom behaviour, another teacher is likely to apply a different set. Distinct



implicit theories, though consistent within themselves, differently interpret and motivate what outwardly appears as the same action. (This reminds us to be cautious with observational studies.) There will, of course, be overlap, and this consensus is the focus of the present analysis.

#### The Findings: Seven Pedagogic Concerns

Each of the 63 accounts were analysed and a thousand reasons were separately identified from them. 7 It was found that the reasons clustered within seven major areas of concern seen to determine all teaching techniques. These seven pedagogic concerns, shared to a significant extent by all informants regardless of the role they took during the experiment, focussed upon three main variables in the context of the lessons. Thus, 43% of all reasons focussed on the attributes or cognitive processes of *the learners* in the classes; 31% focussed upon *the subject matter* of the lessons; and 25.2% justified techniques with reference to *the teacher* in terms of guidance or management responsibilities within the class.8 The seven pedagogic concerns revealed by the data can be described under each of these points of focus.

#### *Focus on the Learners*

##### Concern with the Learner's Affective Involvement

This concern was expressed in a range of reasons which made reference to the emotional climate of lessons. Informants referred to the motivation and confidence in learners that techniques addressed, and the notion of increasing 'receptive capacity' through jokes or short rests in the work. A technique would be adopted, it was claimed, 'for fun, to satisfy curiosity and stimulate their interest in the language (Teacher)'. Teachers did things 'to let us feel at ease relaxed (Learners)' or to meet the learners' apparent need for 'a sense of security (L)'. There was a prevailing concern with emotional blocks to learning so that action was taken 'to avoid frustration (T)' or 'to avoid confusion and ease anxiety and mutual stress (Observer)'. More positively, teachers were seen 'to provide a sense of achievement (L)' or 'positive feedback in a friendly way (T)' in order to 'encourage learners to keep going, keep up enthusiasm and engender confidence leaving us feeling in control and less threatened by talking to each other in the language (L)'.

### Concern with the Learner's Background Knowledge

In contrast to learners' affects, informants identified the knowledge sources which learners brought with them to lessons. Some reasons were more general, referring to the wish to show learners that 'they weren't total beginners and to find out what they already knew about the language (T)' or to 'begin with what was familiar and intelligible with a minimum of new language as a way of getting started with a basic language for communication (L)'. Assumed background knowledge was seen to motivate techniques which aimed 'to build on what learners can already do linguistically (O)' or 'to use their resources as linguists and teachers (T)' or 'their experience as good language learners (T)'. Informants were occasionally more specific in the kinds of knowledge to which techniques were addressed: 'to relate to passive knowledge of the written system (L)'; 'so that learners could discover similarities between English and the new language (L)'; 'to fall back on English in order to recognise and differentiate and understand rules, patterns, etc. (L)'; or so that 'English could be used as a resource through which meanings could be mediated (O)'. This motivation of techniques to 'integrate previous knowledge and recent knowledge (L)' was found in the wish to make explicit links back to knowledge acquired in the earlier lesson 'in order to seek common background before going further (T)' or as 'a starting point for new material (T)'.

### Concern with the Learner's Cognitive Processes

A remarkably high proportion of all informants' justifications for teaching behaviour referred to a range of cognitive processes assumed to facilitate learning. Although maximising the possibility of retention in memory and recall of new material was a dominant theme within this concern, processes of attending and discriminating were often specified within the broader emphasis upon comprehension and understanding. Techniques often sought 'dual input' where 'a written version served as a visual aid when unclear as a prop (T)' or because this 'sorted out ambiguities we were not tolerant of (L)' and when 'writing down concretised the sounds and helped repetition to learn and reinforce (L)'. The use of repetition was seen to 'facilitate discrimination (L)' or 'to facilitate input (L)' or, alternatively, 'for concentration on one specific item (T)'. Many techniques were perceived to 'consolidate' newly learned material 'to automatise or for automaticity (L)' or 'encourage memorisation, eliminate error, and reinforce correct structure or pronunciation (L)'. Some techniques appeared to serve quite complex cognitive operations: 'to recall, repeat, and reproduce in order to help internalise

(L)' or 'to remind of earlier parallels in order to aid transfer to the new (T)'. Certain higher order cognitive processes were also seen to be addressed and techniques were credited with encouraging 'experimentation and rule awareness (O)' or 'a cognitive grasp of the situation (L)', whilst some were given a compensatory aim: 'Both teacher and learners realised the failure of having a "glut" of information that chokes understanding and is lost (L)'.

### *Focus on the Subject Matter*

#### Concern with Language as Usage

Widdowson's (1979b) distinction between language as usage and language as use served to frame informants' justifications for certain techniques which were seen to be appropriate to the actual content of lessons. Widdowson (1979b: 18) suggests that usage 'is the citation of words and sentences as manifestations of the language system'. The data imply that an explicit focus upon the phonological aspects of the system of a target language may also be seen as a concern with usage. In contrast, Widdowson (1979b) proposes that 'use' refers to 'the way the system is realised for normal communicative purposes'. We might relate the teachers' concern with usage or the system of the language to an attention to form. Many teaching behaviours were seen to be appropriate to this concern whilst a high proportion seemed to be directed at pronunciation explicable, perhaps, because the learners were beginners. Justifications included: 'to familiarise learners with new sounds and sound segments (T)' or to confront the likelihood that 'most of the sounds that do not exist in English are at least slightly if not completely modified by learners (T)' or that 'it is important to get the (exact) tone correct so that it is comprehensible (O)'. The principle of 'moving from simple to complex (L)' in system terms was attributed to techniques regarded as building on certain foundations: 'to use vocabulary as a common basic working tool (L)'; 'to enlarge the stock of language items (T)'; or 'to expose learners to syntactic features so they can make sentences themselves (T)'. Techniques that were seen to be providing correct models were a recurrent theme within this concern. Whilst, occasionally, reference was made to assumed learner awareness of systematicity: 'to help learners realise how different "bits" of the language are part of the whole (T)'.

### Concern with Language as use

Teachers were assumed to be quite strongly motivated to encourage their learners to use the new language for meaningful communication activities at certain times and even with an obviously minimal knowledge of the system. We might regard the language class as a rather special context for Widdowson's 'normal communicative purposes', but it was believed by some informants to provide 'the content or context for language use (which) helped learners guess the word from context helped contextualise meanings (L)'. Certain techniques were seen to anticipate early use, whereby the teacher 'provided various items needed in a particular situation to enable communicating or message focus as prime (T)' or 'wanted to input x so that learners could use it in communication in a role play activity using it as soon as possible (T)' or, more broadly, 'to equip learners with skills necessary to complete a communication task (T)'. Even more directly, techniques were credited with enabling learners 'to become immersed in the L2 situation (L)' or have the chance 'to practise in the role of initiator/questioner (O)', whilst milder claims included 'to practise asking and answering' questions (L)' and 'to create a situation for communicating in the target language (L)'. Some reasons within this concern were very specific in claiming, for example, that a technique addressed the 'differences in language use such as formal and informal registers (L)'. One reason, however, seemed to express a commonly perceived priority: 'The teacher felt it was important for us to be able to use the target language in question forms to encourage us to say more (L)'.

#### *Focus on the Teacher*

### Concern with Guidance

Clearly all the reasons in the data are at least implicitly identifying the assumed responsibilities of a teacher. However, justifications for certain techniques explicitly refer to demands which it appears could only be met by the teacher rather than any other member of the class. Explicit reference to the perceived teacher role can be further differentiated into two major functions: teacher as guide and teacher as manager of the lesson or the group.

The teacher as guide is essentially a responsive role in which the teacher does something in reaction to learner feedback or provides formative evaluation to individual learners in relation to their production of the language. A characteristic of these demands upon the teacher is

that their occurrence in a lesson are relatively unpredictable; guidance is related to immediate and seemingly spontaneous matters. The dominant theme of guidance within the data was the provision of feedback to the learners. But a number of techniques were justified because they were asked for by the learners at a particular moment or the teacher adjusted to immediate learner feedback in some way: 'we looked eager to know the rule and the teacher responded to this (L)' or 'because we still hadn't got it right (L)'. The teacher's need 'to evaluate progress and weaknesses (L)' or 'to know how well we could understand x (L)' and even 'to see if learners are following and it is clear (O)' were the kinds of justifications offered for techniques encouraging learner production. The provision of certain facilitative devices by teachers included 'a metalanguage (tools) so that learners can find out what they want to know (O)' and 'teaching spelling to make life easier when students wanted to write down something (T)'. Interesting alternatives were revealed concerning preferred teacher roles, and guidance was seen as a matter of precision by one informant while a major dilemma for another: 'to provide inputs slower, omitting articles etc., exaggerating pronunciation all to make input comprehensible (T)' as compared with 'I tried to get away from the teacher as the centre of the classroom universe to respond and not make all the decisions myself (T)'.

#### Concern with Management of the Lesson or the Group

The teacher as manager is identified by those reasons in the data that refer to a 'supervisory' role in matters to do with implementing lesson plans or maintaining the working procedures of the group in contrast to the responsive and often individual learner oriented guidance role. Reasons here referred to techniques seen to be addressing organisational problems. One major theme was the pace of lessons; techniques served 'to make things easier and faster (L)' or 'to speed up the lesson and avoid boredom (L)'. Another theme was the apparent wish to get all learners in a group equally involved: 'to encourage group participation (L)' or 'to integrate a non-participating member of the group (O)'. The concern with management was further expressed through either fairly general reasons: 'to involve learners in the way the lesson was going (O)' or more focussed ones: 'to enable us to work at our own speeds or preferred pace (L)' and 'needs analysis was necessary to select material the group wanted to learn (L)'. Working procedures were a prevailing justification for techniques within this concern, however, and justifications were sometimes very personal: 'I felt depressed by how the previous lessons had gone and wanted to find out a more successful method of

TABLE 16.2

*Ranking of the seven pedagogic concerns derived from all reasons given*

Concerns	Proportions of reasons from total sample	Proportions within each group*		
		Teachers	Learners	Observers
Learner cognitive processes	30.7%	25.5 (6.9)	32.2 (12.8)	33.0 (11.0)
Language as usage	18.5%	22.2 (6.0)	16.7 (6.4)	18.3 (6.1)
Teacher as guide	15.6%	17.4 (4.7)	14.1 (5.6)	15.9 (5.3)
Language as use	12.5%	15.1 (4.1)	11.5 (4.6)	11.4 (3.8)
Teacher as manager	9.6%	8.1 (2.2)	10.3 (4.1)	9.9 (3.3)
Learner affects	7.9%	7.0 (1.9)	11.3 (4.5)	4.5 (1.5)
Learner background knowledge	5.2%	4.4 (1.2)	4.2 (1.7)	6.9 (2.3)

\*Within group figures are % of Teachers' 270 reasons, Learners' 397 reasons, & Observers' 333 reasons. Bracketed figures are relative proportions of the *total sample* figure.

working (T)' or rather pragmatic: 'to distribute turns and victimise weak learners (O)'.

Priorities among Pedagogic Concerns?

If we regard the seven main pedagogic concerns revealed by the data as expressions of the informants' implicit theories of the teaching-learning process, can we discern priorities among these concerns? Table 16.2 indicates the ranking of concerns on the basis of the proportions of all reasons taken from the 63 accounts. Although we found that a focus on the learner accounted for almost half of all justifications for techniques, such 'learner-centredness' can be seen as primarily a matter of attuning to learners' cognitive processes. In fact, this rationale was reflected in the highest proportion of all reasons offered by all informants, whilst a concern with the learners' affective involvement and their background knowledge in particular were somewhat rarely seen as motivations for teaching behaviour.

The relative emphasis given to concerns further reveals that the focus on subject matter itself was seen to be as important as the facilitation

of cognitive processes. However, within this focus, reasons for techniques favour language as usage slightly more than language as use. Within the third point of focus, the teacher's responsive and evaluative role was more widely justified than the overall management of lessons or the learning group.

### Is Technique in the Eye of the Beholder?

Although we have seen inconsistency between techniques and the reasons given for them, and that this phenomenon may be due to diversity in how individual informants apply their own implicit theories, the relative proportions of reasons relating to specific concerns not only reveal a shared priority but also a consensus between the informants regardless of the role they played during the experiment. This may lend some support to the claim that the data reveal a collective implicit theory shared within this particular group of experienced language teachers.

As Table 16.2 indicates, and comparing the proportion of reasons given by different informants in the role of teacher, learner, or observer, we find that learners gave slightly more emphasis to their own cognitive processes than did the teachers, with the observers sharing the learners' perspective. (The apparent advantage of making an observational record of techniques as they occurred did not stop observers from inferring explanations based mostly upon unobservable phenomena.) Those acting as teachers expressed greater concern with the subject matter of lessons than either the learners or observers assumed. All agreed, however, that a concern with language as usage influenced techniques more than the enabling of language use. Again, consensus is maintained on the guidance role of the teacher, with the teachers slightly more conscious of this than the learners. However, the degree of consensus here suggests that the teachers' self awareness within the role of teacher fairly reflects the shared pedagogic assumptions of the whole group of informants; priority among reasons seems not to be affected by role undertaken during the experiment.

Some diversity of emphasis does emerge when lower rated concerns are examined. The management role of the teacher was appealed to relatively more by learners than the teachers themselves. And learners believed that techniques addressed their affects more than did teachers or observers, quite possibly because they were more aware of their own affective investment in lessons and they subsequently trusted that teachers would be sympathetic to this. It is surprising, perhaps, that teachers were only rarely seen to exploit the learners' background knowledge, especially



given the language learning and educational experience of those in the role of learners. The observers, however, seemed to believe that this knowledge was attended to more than the learners' affects.

In general, there is a tendency among the whole group of informants to agree on what priorities teaching techniques are likely to address. Learners attribute teaching behaviours more to a concern with their own attributes and processes than with subject matter, whilst teachers claim equal attention to both. Teachers appear more concerned with subject matter, believing that they focus both on usage and use more than the learners believe. And whilst learners assume a teacher is more sensitive to their affects than is the case, both seem to agree that a learner's background knowledge is a rare focus. This may stem from certain assumptions about beginner learners. Rare concern with affects is balanced by the tendency of both teachers and learners to see techniques that express a responsive teacher role as a relatively high priority.

### Explaining Teacher Explanations

The study described in this paper was intended to explore an aspect of teachers' thinking in relation to perceived teacher action in a language class. The relatively informed sample of mixed nationality teachers sharing a combined wealth of diverse experience may be seen as not representative of 'typical' language teachers. Their level of awareness in noticing more than seven hundred teaching techniques and providing over a thousand reasons for these techniques from only 31 ½ hours of class time might also be untypical. Their disposition to offer detailed reflections must also be a function of the experimental context. At the present, we can only guess whether or not some direct method of investigation in more everyday teaching situations especially with less sophisticated learners will reveal a similar picture. The method of investigation did retain certain advantages, however, over the more common questionnaire and interview approaches to teacher thinking. The informants responded on the basis of actual classroom events. They only offered reasons for what they did or saw *after* identifying fairly precisely the source on which their judgements would be based. And they did not know in advance that their explanations for teaching behaviour would be a particular focus of study.

The three main points of focus and the seven pedagogic concerns within them might have been expected. What could not be anticipated was the relative emphasis given to each concern. And certain patterns emerged from this. The priority given to mental processes of learners,

phenomena rarely accessible to awareness let alone observation, revealed that informants based a significant proportion of their explanations of teaching upon metaphorical descriptions of the human mind. However, informants may have accounted for things that they felt they 'ought' to include as participants in an experiment on an advanced professional course. Their views on cognitive processes fairly reflected the prevailing research literature which they had evaluated. But the lesser emphasis upon the contribution of learner affects and background knowledge seemed to contradict this explanation, suggesting that their experience as teachers encouraged a universalistic view of the psychology of learners which may have outweighed the complexity of accounting for more individualistic learner attributes.

The fact that informants in the role of learners were genuine beginners may explain the lesser significance given to background knowledge and the greater significance given to the new language as a system. But the meaningful use of the language very early in lessons was valued almost as much. Familiarity with current theory and practice in 'communicative' approaches to language teaching might explain this. Finally, the informants favoured a responsive guidance role when focussing upon the teacher's specific responsibilities more than they acknowledged the need for management. The experiment, however, proposed that teachers should serve an 'informative' rather than 'directive' role with small groups of learners. But this does not explain why those acting as teachers mostly adopted techniques which they saw as conventionally 'directive', and which both learners and observers also characterised in this way. Again, was it because the learners were beginners that they *expected* techniques to be more 'directive' and that both teachers and observers assumed this 'directiveness' to be necessary?

That the experiment required teachers to teach their peers renders it ungeneralisable. But this requirement seemed neither to conflict with their readiness to choose the roles they did during the experiment nor their willingness to be explicit about each other's teaching. If there may have been a tendency in how the informants kept their records and compiled accounts, it was the wish to be positive and fair about what their colleagues were trying to achieve. (This became clear in discussions of the data after the experiment as did general agreement that the accounts, though sometimes ambiguous and inevitably partial, were fair representations of participants' perceptions of the lessons.)

A major explanation for the findings is that the patterns of emphasis in reasons given for teaching behaviours reflect how this group of teachers

viewed the constraints and contingencies relating to the particular teaching-learning context within which they were placed. The wide range of techniques adopted or perceived were particular solutions to 'the problem' confronting the teacher seen by informants' definitions of the situation. Active solutions expressed those pedagogic concerns embedded within individual implicit theories of the teaching-learning process. Reasons informants gave for techniques reveal implicit theories and the extent to which they were shared. In other words, the rationale which emerged from informant accounts represented how they, as experienced teachers, *think* about the effective teaching of a language to beginners. The data provided a window on to the collective consciousness of this group of teachers regarding their own work. We might deduce that such consciousness has its roots in their experience and knowledge and that it will influence the teachers' actions and particularly the meaning they give to these actions in the future.

This is not to suggest that the teachers' actions and the motivations and interpretations maintaining them will not change. Both teaching behaviour and the implicit theories underlying it will interact in a continuing dynamic as the teachers' experience and knowledge also evolve. The present study, in uncovering a collective implicit theory, inevitably clouds the heterogeneity of beliefs of individual teachers and we have to assume that there will be, diversity in how teachers conceptualise their own pedagogic priorities.

### The Significance of Teachers' Theories

I would argue that the kinds of insights provided by even a limited investigation such as the one described in this paper offer valuable alternative routes for researchers in classroom language learning and for teacher trainers. Recent research on the strategies learners adopt during language learning has moved beyond symptomatic behaviour to explore the beliefs and conceptualisations that underlie learning strategies (Cherchalli, 1988; Horwitz, 1988; Slimani, 1988; Wenden, 1988). And recent research on language teaching reflecting a growing awareness of the limitations of correlating only the observables of classroom activity with learning outcomes has begun to explore the act of teaching through the attitudes, beliefs, and values which sustain the teaching process and give it particular meanings (Swaffar, Arens & Morgan 1982; Corrigan, 1983; Holden, 1984; Dingwall, 1985; O'Brien, 1986; Ramani, 1987). What makes language lessons comprehensible are the diverse interpretations of the participants. And these interpretations interact with

the culture jointly created by the particular classroom group beneath the surface of working structure and routines (Breen, 1985). The teacher is, of course, a crucial contributor to this creative process.

Whilst descriptive research in language classrooms maintains only indirect relevance for the development of teaching (Mitchell, 1985; 1988), the further investigation of teachers' own conceptualisations of their role has a crucial function within curriculum change of any kind. Even relatively minor changes in pedagogy, the adoption of new materials, of an unfamiliar technique, or coming to terms with a new teaching situation, for example, will confront the teacher with a challenge to established concerns. Curriculum change and the teacher's own development both require accommodation of new elements within a personal implicit theory. If a teacher appreciates that particular action in the classroom can be less readily justified, an opportunity for adaptation arises. Similarly, if a teacher perceives alternative justifications and accepts these, then alternative ways of working become plausible.

This reflexive process between personal theory and classroom action is at the heart of curriculum implementation. By uncovering the kinds of knowledge and beliefs which teachers hold and how they express these through the meaning that they give to their work, we may come to know the most appropriate support we can provide in in-service development. Professional growth in language teaching, as Widdowson (1984) suggests, depends upon the teachers' willing reflection upon why they work in the classroom in the ways they do. The aim of this paper has been to illustrate the potential of teacher reflection. Understanding the language teacher is not merely a matter of perceiving what the teacher does in a lesson. In order to understand, we are obliged to hear the multiplicity of meanings *given* to what is done by the people who undertake teaching and learning together.

#### Notes

1. Stern (1983) offers an explanation for the justified retreat from method whilst Allwright (1988) provides an historical and evaluative account of the last twenty years of language classroom research. Mitchell (1985) critically reviews classroom oriented research of recent years and deduces its limitations.
2. On the basis of Cherchalli's (1988) study of learner perspectives, Allwright (1987) has suggested that there may be a joint conspiracy between teachers and learners in which failures to understand are deliberately not resolved during lessons.
3. Ethnographic approaches to classrooms are fairly well established outside language teaching (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Hammersley, 1986, *inter*

*alia*) whilst van Lier (1988) makes a strong case for action research by teachers and learners. There has been a recent growth of work on teacher thinking exemplified by Taylor (1974), Doyle (1986), Shavelson & Stern (1981), Youngman (1982), Winne & Marx (1982), Halkes & Olsen (1984), and Calderhead (1984).

4. I wish to express my strong gratitude to the teachers who participated in this study. They were all attending a Master's course in the Department of Linguistics and Modern English Language between the years 1984-8. As Table 16.1 indicates, 23 of the overseas teachers came from Asia, 17 from Africa, 6 from Latin America, 2 from the Middle East, and 3 from Europe outside Britain.

5. During the experiment, instructions given to participants referred to those in the teaching role as 'knowers'. This term became something of a shared joke as subsequent discussions with participants were not only peppered with the referent 'teacher' but also revealed that this was the preferred status attributed to the role by virtually everybody except myself!

6. Interestingly, the 21 informants in the role of teacher recorded just over a quarter of 763 techniques (194), suggesting that the teacher's need to attend closely to a range of competing and complex priorities during a lesson may make it harder than either learners identifying 268 or observers (301) to recall many of the things they did. It may be, also, that some teachers took certain of their own actions for granted without raising them to the status of a conscious technique. The larger proportion of total techniques identified by observers suggests an advantage of immediate recording over recall. This further suggests that the use of video recordings from lessons as a means to teacher reflection would be valuable (Ramani, 1987).

7. For the purposes of analysis only a handful of reasons had to be disregarded because of difficulty of interpretation or ambiguity. In identifying a particular reason under a specific category of pedagogic concern, it was found that a small proportion of reasons could be categorised under more than one concern. Such reasons were quantified separately *within* each category. Regarding the total sample of reasons, a very small number were randomly excluded in equal proportion across the three type of informant accounts in order to reduce to an even number sample.

8. The proportions of reasons focussing upon the learner given by the three different types of informant were: teachers 10% (37.0% *of their own reasons*); learners 19% (47.8%); observers 14.8% (44.4%). Focus upon subject matter accounted for: teachers 10.1% (37.4%); learners 11% (27.7%); observers 9.9% (25.8%). Focus upon teacher roles of guidance and management accounted for: teachers 6.9% (25.5%); learners 9.7% (24.4%); observers 8.6% (25.8%). These relative weightings given by each type of informant are examined in the later discussion of possible priorities revealed by the data.

## References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

17

## Manipulating and Complementing Content Teaching to Maximise Second Language Learning 1

Merill Swain

## Introduction

Claus's contributions to understanding the discourse of the foreign language classroom were many. The present paper extends his work to contexts in which the second language is being learned through the teaching of content in the target language. The purpose of this paper is to suggest that not all content teaching is necessarily good language teaching. I hope to show, by way of examples from French immersion teaching, some ways in which typical content teaching is inadequate as a second language learning environment. And again, by means of examples, I hope to suggest some ways in which content teaching can be manipulated and complemented to enhance its language learning potential.

There are many classrooms in Canada and elsewhere where the learning of content and the learning of a second language are both programme goals. There is at least one major assumption about content teaching that is current in second language theory and pedagogical practices today. The assumption is because content teaching is considered communicative language teaching *par excellence* that through content teaching, second language learning will be enhanced.

This was certainly one of the assumptions underlying the initiation

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of French immersion programmes. But just as it has come to be recognised in English content classes that learners of non-English backgrounds need the support of ESL classes, so in French immersion classes, the French language arts component is seen to support the language learning of the content class. What goes on in the content class, and the relationship of the language arts component to it, is the focus of this paper.

### Content Learning as Language Learning

My guess is that most of us accept the assumption that second language learning will be enhanced through content learning. However, there are pockets of evidence to suggest that such an assumption may be unwarranted, or at least, needs to be qualified.

For example, consider the results of an experiment carried out in Hong Kong (Ho, 1985). The first language of the students in the experiment was Cantonese and they had had English as a subject for six years and had been using textbooks written in English in all subjects in the previous year. The students, at the time of the experiment, were in grade 8, and consisted of the top-performing students in their school. The heart of the experiment was that for five months some of these grade 8 students were taught 60% of their curriculum totally in English, while other grade 8 students in the same school were taught all their curriculum in Cantonese. Students were randomly assigned to the English-instructed class or to the Cantonese-instructed class. The same teachers taught in both classes so that, for example, a teacher who taught Science in English to the English-instructed class taught the same lesson the same day to the other students in Cantonese.

Unfortunately, the write-up of the study describes very little about the substance of the tests or the criteria used for evaluating English language performance, but it does indicate that at the end of the fifth month, there were no differences between the two groups in their performance on the English language tests which were given. In other words, five months of instruction in English using the content from a variety of academic subjects did not enhance the learning of English for these grade 8 Hong Kong students.

There are many possible explanations for this finding. For example, none of the teachers were native speakers of English. However this is not atypical of ESL teachers in many parts of the world; and one would still expect some modest difference in English language performance between the two groups to be found. The explanation I consider most



likely concerns the methodology of the presentation of the content.

Of course, I do not know precisely what methodology the teachers in the Hong Kong experiment were actually using, but I am willing to make guesses. My guesses are based on what I observed when I was in Hong Kong for three months in 1985, on what has been observed in typical content classrooms in the United States (Goodlad, 1984), and what I have observed in typical French immersion classrooms in Canada. The methodology is straightforward: teachers work through a content lesson by asking a lot of questions about something they have presented before, or that the students have read before. The teachers ask questions with particular answers in mind; students' responses are usually fairly short and to the point. This back and forth between teachers and their students is rapid and lively as students' hands go up and down. Teachers tend to correct errors of content, and occasionally correct errors of syntax, morphology or pronunciation. Diversions from the main theme of the lesson arising from personal experiences or insights tend not to occur. Written seat-work may be assigned where the students answer more questions, or fill in blanks. This methodology, I would argue, leaves a lot to be desired from a language learning point of view.

Let us consider an actual lesson in more depth a few segments taken from a history lesson. The segments are taken from a grade 6 French immersion class in which all instruction is in French, the students' second language (Swain & Lapkin, 1982; Genesee, 1987). The segments are presented in their English translations in Examples 1, 2 and 3.

The brief description just provided of typical content classrooms is evident in these translated segments. The teacher explains or summarises facts and asks questions. The students reply with a word or short sentence. The teacher keeps them 'on-target', content-wise.

The three examples provided below represent only a tiny portion of data we have collected in a recent study (Swain & Carroll, 1987). The study involved observing and tape-recording the full school day of nine grade 3 immersion classes and ten grade 6 immersion classes in Ontario schools. We have transcribed the tape-recordings and have begun to analyse the transcripts from a variety of perspectives. One of the things we have looked at is the frequency and length of student talk in these teacher-fronted lessons.

Each student turn in each of the classes was categorised according to its length. They were categorised as 'minimal', 'phrase', 'clause' or 'sustained' in length. Minimal length refers to turns of one or two words in length. Phrase length refers to turns consisting of an adverbial phrase,

a nominal phrase or a verb phrase; and clause length refers to a turn consisting of one clause. Any student turn which was longer than a clause was categorised as sustained talk.

The results indicate that there are on the average, about two student turns per minute. In grade 6, about 44% of those are of minimal length. Only 18% of student turns are sustained in length. Those include occasions when students read aloud. When those occasions are subtracted, then it turns out that only about 14% of the times that students talk in teacher-fronted activities are their utterances longer than a clause. The figures are not much different for the grade 3 classes. As I will argue shortly, opportunities to produce sustained output in the second language are crucial to the second language learning process. Sustained talk provides both opportunities for variety and complexity of language use, and it forces the learner to pay attention to how content is expressed. This suggests that at least some portion of content lessons needs to be structured in different ways in order to permit more opportunities for the sustained use of language by students.

Now, let us consider the excerpts from a history lesson taken from a grade 6 immersion class. The lesson is about the Antilles in 1796 what it was like then and the sorts of things that were influencing life at that time. Before actually reading the excerpts, consider two questions. First, what will be the most common tense used by the teacher past, present or future? Secondly, as a language teacher, what would be one reason to teach a historical theme?

I assume that the answer to both of these questions was 'the past tense'. Now, let us examine what happens when language is used authentically in the content classroom.

#### *Example 1*

T: It (Europe) *didn't have* sugar cane. Why *didn't* they *have* sugar cane? Mary?

S: *It's* too cold.

T: It's too cold. Another word for 'the weather'?

S: The climate is not good.

#### *Example 2*

T: What do you think? How *did* these plantations *influence* life in the Antilles? How do you think that these *plantations . . . are going . . . uhm to change . . .* life in the Antilles?

### Example 3

T: These people *are going to sell* their sugar . . . rum . . . molasses . . . brown sugar. They *are going to make* money. With the money, they *are going to buy* clothes, furniture. . . horses. . . carriages. . . all that they want and they *are going to bring back* to the Antilles. . . one imports. . . the Antilles import. . . Now I want to go back to what John was saying because I thought that that was what he was trying to explain to me. How *is it going to change* life in the Antilles?

S: Modernise.

T: OK. We *are going to import* modern objects. . .to the Antilles. OK, it's one way that that's *going to influence* things. Another. . .Is there another way of influHow *are the plantations going to influence* life in the Antilles?

S: All the slaves and all the different cultures who work on the uhm XXX.

T: Yes! You have these huge plantations. . .you certainly *are going to have* some cultures and customs that are. . .

S: Different.

T: *Are going to mix* together.

Example 1 illustrates one of the teacher's relatively infrequent uses of the past tense in this history lesson. Notice that the student answers in the present tense. The teacher indicates acceptance by her repetition of the phrase, and concentrates on content by asking for a word that will, in her estimation, improve the response.

In Example 2, we see the teacher switch from past tense usage in 'How did these plantations influence life in the Antilles?' to future tense usage 'How do you think that these plantations. . .are going. . . uhm to change. . . life in the Antilles?' Use of the 'immediate future', that is the use of the verb 'to go' plus verb to signal action that is just about to happen, appears to be one of this teacher's favoured strategies in this lesson. Example 3 is illustrative.

These examples illustrate the conflict that arises between teaching content and teaching language. What the teacher has done by her use of the 'immediate future' is superb from a content teaching point Of view. Its use has brought the distant past into the lives of the children, got them involved, and undoubtedly helped them to understand the social and economic principles which this historical unit was intended to demonstrate. However, as a language lesson these examples illustrate several problemsproblems which may arise in any instructional setting

based on authentic communication; problems which arise at the interface of language and content teaching.

First, the focus is entirely meaning-oriented. This is, of course, precisely what Krashen (1982) has argued is needed for second language acquisition to occur. He has argued that what learners should do is 'go for meaning'. But, I would argue, if students are to actually acquire a second language by 'going for meaning', then they have to be engaging, in some way, in some sort of form-function analysis. That is, they will have to be paying attention to the form of the utterance as it is used to express the meaning they are extracting.

However, as Krashen (1982: 66), himself suggests, 'In many cases, we do not utilize syntax in understanding we often get the message with a combination of vocabulary, or lexical information plus extra-linguistic information'. In other words, it is possible to comprehend input to get the message without a syntactic or, I would add, a morphological analysis of that input. What appears to occur is 'selective listening' (VanPatten, 1985).

Selective attention is illustrated in part of an interview with an ESL speaker shown below (Wenden, 1983).

Q: Are you comfortable with him (the boss)?

A: Yes, he speaks slowly, more slowly than others, so it's easier for me.

Q: Do you ever notice how he says things?

A: When doing business I don't consider grammar. Mostly I try to get the meaning. It's not necessary to catch all the words. (Wenden, 1983: 6)

Other kinds of evidence for selective listening exist. In one study of adult learners of Spanish, VanPatten (1985) isolated instances where learners apparently ignore how something was said to them. The example below is one such instance.

Q: Como *estan* ellos? (How are they?)

A: *Son* contento. (They're happy.)

Q: Y ellos, como *estan*? (And how are they?)

A: *Son* contento tambien. (They're happy too.) (VanPatten, 1985: 91)

The learner appears not to have attended to the use of the correct copula *estar* in the interviewer's first question and produced an utterance in which the wrong copula *ser* was used. In the next question, therefore, the interviewer moved the copula to a more salient position.

sentence final position but the learner still did not attend to how the interviewer phrased the question.

We have many similar examples from interviews conducted with French immersion students. The next example is illustrative:

Q: Et qu'est-ce que tu *ferais* si tu gagnais la loterie? Si tu gagnais d'argent?

A: Je *vais mettre* dans la banque . . . (Harley & Swain, 1977: 41)

Here the question is asked using the conditional, and the student responds by using the immediate future form.

As VanPatten indicates, there are occasional reports on selective listening throughout the second language acquisition literature. What they all have in common is that 'selective listening seems to involve concentrated focus on informational content and not necessarily on how that content was delivered' (VanPatten, 1985: 91). Additionally, linguistic literature on discourse argues for the notion of a fuzzy, open, non-deterministic syntactic parsing strategy that is used for comprehending discourse but that would be inadequate for producing it (see Clark & Clark, 1977; van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). Thus it may be that any grammatical processing involved in comprehension may be quite different from the closed logical system of rules required to produce a grammatical utterance. In other words, we can understand discourse without precise syntactic and morphological knowledge, but we cannot produce it accurately without precise syntactic and morphological knowledge.

Given that this is the case, then one role of the teacher becomes fairly evident: to help learners undertake the sort of form-function analysis needed to be effective and accurate communicators in their second language. This does *not* imply teaching rules, although it may well be an effective strategy for some aspects of language and for some learners.

What it does imply is that input that will help learners focus their attention on particular form-functional relationships is essential. Providing relevant input will necessarily be contrived: one has first to identify the area of focus, and then contrive contexts in which its use is natural. This will most certainly involve conscious reflection about the relationship between language form and content. I will return to this point below.

An equally important way to help learners focus their attention on particular form-functional relationships is to require them to produce language. If, as has been suggested, learners do not need precise syntactic and morphological knowledge to understand the gist of language input, but do need such knowledge for accurate production, then it will be by

requiring students to produce, that they will become aware of their grammatical needs (Swain, 1985). Their language production will have to be at more than a phrase or clause level if they are to learn the mechanisms for coherent and accurate discourse.

The second problem illustrated by the history lesson excerpts (Examples 1, 2 and 3) is closely related to the first (that of the focus being entirely meaning-oriented). In concentrating entirely on meaning, teachers frequently provide learners with inconsistent and possibly random information about their target language use. If the students are engaging in any sort of form-function analysis while listening to their teacher, consider the message relayed to them based on the first two history lesson examples. The message the hidden grammar lesson for the students is that past tense, the immediate future and the present tense are interchangeable. In Example 1, a student's response in the present tense to a question asked about the past is accepted, in facet, repeated by the teacher, and, in Example 2, the teacher switches from past to future within the same context.

As I mentioned earlier, these examples represent only a tiny portion of the data we have collected in an observational study of grade 3 and grade 6 immersion classes. One analysis we have carried out of these data involves the classification and counting of surface level grammatical errors made by the grade 6 immersion students as they interacted with their teachers. For each error, we noted whether the teacher corrected it. We counted both implicit and explicit instances of correction. Our findings show that only 19% of the grammatical errors students made were corrected, while the remainder were ignored by the teachers. The pattern of correction appears to be determined as much by an 'irritation' factor as by any consistent pedagogical or linguistic factors.

The solution is most definitely not to correct every error each time one is made. There is no research evidence to suggest that such a procedure would be effective and it would certainly impede the flow of communication. What the most effective correction strategies might be is not clear. Again, I will return to this point below.

The third problem, and one which cannot be inferred from any one individual example, is that what the students hear the input they receive may be functionally restricted. Certain uses of language may simply not naturally occur, or may occur fairly infrequently in the classroom setting. When the main source of second language input is the classroom, this problem is particularly serious.

Let me give two examples of what I mean by 'functionally restricted'

uses of language. Both examples come from our observational study of French immersion classes. I would ask you to think of possible examples from your own ESL or foreign language classroom teaching. This is not an easy task. The difficulty in doing so, is that you need to think about what is *not* there, not about what *is* there. Furthermore, intuitions about one's own language use are frequently inaccurate. One way to start thinking about your own language use in class is to tape yourself teaching for a day. Later, you can listen and re-listen to it from a variety of different perspectives.

By 'functionally restricted' I mean that the full functional range of the linguistic item of focus is not used, or is infrequently used. One example is the use of *vous* and *tu* by French immersion teachers. We decided to look at this because we found that in tests of sociolinguistic performance, immersion students tended to overuse *tu* in situations calling for the use of *vous* situations such as making a request to an adult. In other words, in formal contexts, *vous* was underused by immersion students relative to native speakers of the same age. We thought the explanation for this might be linked to the input the students received in class.

The transcripts of the ten grade 6 classes were examined, and all instances of the teachers' uses of *tu* and *vous* were counted and classified according to the functions they served. The French pronouns *tu* and *vous* carry both grammatical and sociolinguistic information. A number distinction may be signalled by the use of the singular *tu* versus plural *vous*. A sociolinguistic distinction may be manifested in the familiar *tu* versus the formal *vous* which is a marker of respect or politeness.

If we look only at form, then no explanation for the immersion students' results emerge. That is to say, the transcripts reveal that *tu* and *vous* are used about equally often by immersion teachers on the average, each roughly about once a minute. When we look at function, however, the picture changes dramatically. It turns out that there are very few occurrences of *vous* where it is used by teachers as a marker of politeness or deference: less than one instance per class.

The second example of functionally restricted language use in immersion classes involves the use of verb tenses. We decided to look at the verb usage of teachers because correct use of non-present tenses is an area of continuing difficulty among immersion students. Among our findings is that students tend to overuse the *passé composé*, doing so in contexts where the imperfect should be used. Furthermore, the imperfect is rarely used with action verbs. We have also found that even at grade



10, immersion students correctly produce the conditional only a little more than half the time in obligatory contexts (Harley & Swain, 1985).

Our analysis of the teacher talk is not complete, but what we have found is, I think, interesting in light of the student performance results just mentioned. We began by looking at the frequency with which different verb forms were used by grade 6 immersion teachers. On average, over three-quarters of the verbs used by the grade 6 immersion teachers are in the present or imperative. The proportion of verbs in teacher talk in the past tense is approximately 15%; the future tense, 6%; and the conditional tense, 3%. Of the verbs used in the past tense, about two-thirds are in the *passé composé* and one-third in the imperfect. The use of the imperfect was almost completely limited to the verbs *avoir*, *être*, *faire* and *vouloir*. Its use with action verbs was virtually non-existent. These figures, it seems to us, go a long way towards explaining the second language performance of the students.

To summarise to this point, there are many classrooms in which both the learning of academic content and a second language are or should be major goals. In traditional teaching of content, however, the language the teacher uses may be functionally restricted in certain ways, correction of content takes precedence over correction of form in order to preserve the communicative flow, correction of form that does occur is inconsistent in its message, and students' opportunities to engage in extended discourse are limited.

## Solutions

What solutions can be offered?

Solutions will have to have at least the following four characteristics. First, they will have to ensure that students obtain language input in its full functional range. Secondly, students must be given the opportunity to produce language in its full functional range. Thirdly, there will have to be a way of providing consistent and helpful feedback to learners about their language errors. Fourthly, any solution will have to help learners attend to and act on their language weaknesses.

Perhaps it is best to begin by suggesting what are *not* solutions.

First, it is not a solution to suggest that teachers change their language use in teaching content. The language that is used is authentic it represents functionally motivated speech. But it *is* a solution to ask teachers to be aware of their language use so that they can engineer

contexts which demand specific and otherwise infrequent uses of language.

As we saw in the history lesson (Examples 1, 2 and 3), the teacher's use of the immediate future was strongly motivated on pedagogical grounds. Teaching the lesson using the past tense would have had the effect of distancing the events, and removing them from the immediate reality of the students. The solution is *not* to force language into content, but to explore content sufficiently so that language in its full range emerges. That takes time, and will only occur over a range of activities, topics and subjects.

Secondly, it is *not* a solution to correct all the language errors learners make during the content class. The flow of communication would quickly grind to a halt. The fact of the matter is that we do not know what error correction strategies might be most effective. There is surprisingly little research data on this important issue, and it is an area ripe for systematic study.

In the typical content class, with student talk and writing being as restricted as it is, students do not have to work at getting their meaning across accurately, coherently and appropriately. However, in the activities which I will discuss shortly, students are producing language for real audiences and a specific purpose. They are motivated to create their intended meaning precisely which involves grammatical accuracy, coherent discourse, and appropriate register.

Error correction derives its consistency from the stage in an activity in which it occurs. Students come to understand that there is a stage of 'spontaneous production' during which they generate text that will need to proceed through further stages of revision and editing before it is 'publicly presentable'. Through these stages of revision and editing, self and peer monitoring are as important as teacher feedback. At the same time, there will be an important role for the teacher since consistency in error correction also derives from the questions which initiate the process. That is to say, the questions which motivate error correction are not 'Wrong! Repeat after me', but rather along the lines of 'Do you mean this, or do you mean that? It's not clear from what you've said. Or it's not clear from the way you've written this'. In the immersion study, teachers spent only minimal amounts of observed time asking students what they intended in producing a specific utterance or in writing a text. Yet surely there is pedagogic value in systematically encouraging students to reflect on what they want to say and then helping them to make an appropriate and accurate choice of target language forms to produce 'comprehensible output' (Swain, 1985).

The needs of content learners as language learners argue for limiting the sort of content teaching observed in the history lesson, and increasing the opportunities for learners to hear and use language over a much wider range of activities within the topics and subjects to be covered. Moving in this direction would be to recognise both the need of using language for content learning and of using content for language learning.

### Examples

Examples of content teaching which take into account the needs of their learners as language learners can be found in some classes, schools, and Boards of Education across Canada. In Vancouver, for example, one of the most interesting and one of the few systematic curricular attempts to integrate content and language teaching for ESL learners is under way. The project team, under the leadership of Bernard Mohan and Margaret Early, are working with a group of teachers in the Vancouver School Board. Together they are preparing an activity-based content curriculum that will develop the language that is needed for academic content; for example, the language of description, sequence and choice; the language of classification, principles and evaluation.

Many other examples of content teaching adapted to the needs of second language learners can be found. The approaches taken have been two-pronged. The methodology of the content class itself has been modified to incorporate activities that demand extended use of written and oral language by students across a wide range of functions. Consider, for example, the history lesson on the Antilles. The teacher was trying to introduce the concepts of imports and exports; she was trying to show that life changed because of the flow of goods and to indicate ways in which life changed as a result. A number of activities the students might undertake come to mind. For example, source books could be read, skits could be written and acted out, recipes using local Antilles' products could be located or concocted, descriptions of imported products could be written, advertisements could be created, and so on. Groups of students could research different stages of the importing/exporting process: finding buyers, preparing the product, packaging the product, managing staff, shipping, dock handling, and delivering. Each group could prepare descriptions of what needs to be done, identify problems and how to deal with them, write the needed letters, list the individuals that need to be contacted, and so on. Eventually each group could compare their findings with other groups.

But suppose that the teacher wanted to focus specifically on the use of the past tense. She might then ask students, for example, to imagine a situation where the goods ordered by a wealthy plantation owner had been paid for, but it was long after the agreed upon arrival date and the goods had not yet arrived. The task of each student is to write a letter to the importer inquiring about the order. Language such as 'I *ordered* X on . . . The order *consisted* of . . .' will be required. The letters could be sent to a classmate who must respond as the importer. Language such as 'It *was sent* on . . . It *came back* badly damaged, I *received* your payment only last week', and so on will be essential to complete the task. Of course, other tenses may be used, but the teacher may choose to focus only on the accurate use of the past tense in this particular exercise.

Other aspects of language use could be built in. The tone of the plantation owner's letter could be discussed. Is the owner angry, businesslike or friendly? What are the language forms that signal his or her state of mind? How should the importer respond? Should he or she respond differently depending on the plantation owner's tone? How can these differences be signalled through language?

The second approach to adapting content teaching to fit the needs of language learners has been to complement it with a language arts programme. Here, the language implications of the content classroom activities can be explored in more depth. The Antilles letters could be followed up by other activities involving letter-writing. Letters to friends, letters to request information, letters to complain, letters to order goods, letters to invite, letters to refuse invitations, and so on, could be written. Focus on differences in style, the linguistic means by which politeness is expressed, the language of requests are matters which the students could explore. There is conscious reflection on the relationship between language form and meaning. Not only might the students write letters themselves to real individuals, but they might bring in letters sent to their parents, including the usual collection of junk mail, for comment and analyses.

Recently I spent some time in Fair Oaks Elementary School, a school in Redwood City in California. The school is located in a low income, high minority, industrial area where Spanish is the primary language of most students. Many students, prior to the introduction of their current programme four years ago, tested considerably below the fiftieth percentile on national tests in reading and language. Scores are now considerably higher, and the absenteeism rate is the lowest in the District.

The school describes itself as a bilingual, whole language school. In

a brochure that the principal hands out to visitors it says 'Fair Oaks is a place where visitors can observe children . . . using reading and writing to learn about the world, using real books and writing real stories, discovering how to spell by writing and reading, critiquing each other's writings, (and) revising their work based on peer conferences . . .'. The brochure also points out that Fair Oaks is a place where visitors can observe 'teachers . . . who read aloud to students daily from a variety of books with rich language and complex ideas, (and) . . . whose instructional practices reflect their knowledge that . . . language skill development is embedded in genuine reading and writing, (and that) language is acquired through using it rather than practicing its separate parts . . .'. School staff proudly point to the fact that no basal (simplified) readers are found in the classrooms. Rather, children are reading literature from published books and are creating their own texts.

The school's description of itself is no exaggeration. In fact, it seems to me to be somewhat of an understatement of the richness of language in both English and Spanish use that occurs in this school. Let me give you some specific examples of language arts activities I observed.

In a grade 1 class, children were working in small groups or individually. A couple of students were lined up to talk to the teacher. There seemed to be no need for discipline as the children were thoroughly absorbed in what they were doing. This state of organised calm was not created overnight, but by the gradual development of routines. The majority activity while I was in the classroom was journal writing. Journal writing begins with each child writing a diary-type entry into their journal. It ends with a 'published' book. Children were at various stages in the process from journal entry to final publication. Some children were discussing it with their teacher or a fellow student. Some were expanding or correcting what they had written. Others were dictating their story to the teacher who wrote it correctly into a stapled set of pages. Yet others were illustrating their book, deciding who to dedicate their book to, reading their book to others, placing their book in the classroom library, or reading their classmates' books from the library.

At later grade levels, the same process was occurring but students were taking greater and greater responsibility for the production of the language which appeared in their published books. In a grade 5 class, the process was written on the blackboard: choose a topic, write, conference, revise, edit, publish. The rule is that nothing gets published with errors. So when the students consider their work to be ready for publication when their limits on content and form are reached the

teacher provides them with feedback about their remaining errors of form. This, then, is form corrected in a context created by students where the students, themselves, have signalled that they now need feedback.

In another class, I was shown through a radio broadcasting studio. Every Friday, for half an hour, a group of grade 5 and 6 students go on the air. The programme consists, among other things, of news, stories, jokes, commercials, guest speakers, sensational citizens' awards, school and community announcements, and language arts projects. It is not difficult to see how the preparation of such a show incorporates the four characteristics required of a solution to the problems of traditional content teaching that I have outlined, and how easily the theme of any show could be related to any academic content being taught. The language which is needed for any particular radio show includes a variety of genres, and over time can encompass an endless range of language. Preparation of each script may involve reading newspapers, magazines, community flyers, cookbooks, joke books, content text-books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and so forth. Knowledgeable resource people have to be decided on, contacted and interviewed. Recordings of the interviews can be made and transcribed. Notes have to be made, and these have to be translated into written texts. Scripts have to be written and perfected. Rehearsals to get it right have to take place.

On the day I visited, I was shown through the radio studio by the student secretary. She showed me the most recent letter they had received. It was in response to a letter they had written to Queen Elizabeth inviting her to be interviewed on their show. The Queen's letter was a perfect example of a formal letter of polite refusal. Although I did not see the letter that went to the Queen, I am sure that its form as well as its content was thoroughly debated and carefully produced.

The students involved are now providing training to students from other schools who wish to begin their own radio station.

In another classroom, I watched cross-age tutoring. Each grade 5 student had been paired with a kindergarten child. The grade 5 students had each chosen a book they thought their child would enjoy, and during their time together their responsibility was to read the story to their kindergarten child and ask their child questions about the story. The older child wrote down the question, the kindergarten child wrote out a response, and the older child wrote the younger child's meaning underneath his or her response. After the kindergarten children had been returned back to their classroom, the grade 5 students returned to their desks to reflect individually on their experience by writing field notes. A

teacher-led group discussion followed in which several of the students read aloud from their field notes. This was a daily event for the students. Through this activity, the students are given the opportunity for extended language use in both written and spoken form. Through their field notes, the older students learn to reflect on their child's language use and progress. Language becomes a focus of attention and analysis.

To summarise, I have tried to show that typical content teaching is not necessarily good second language teaching. Appropriately, content teaching focusses on comprehending meaning. However, what second language learners need is to focus on form-meaning relationships. Doing so is facilitated through the production of language, whether in written or spoken form. Because the typical question/answer sequence found in content classes tends to elicit short responses of minimal complexity from students, at least part of the content lesson needs to be substituted with activities which demand longer, more complex, and coherent language from the learners.

Focussing on form-meaning relationships is also facilitated through conscious reflection on the relationship between form and meaning in authentic language samples, and in their own language as students struggle to convey precisely their intended meaning. Students need to be guided through this process by engaging them in activities which have been contrived by the teachers to focus the learners' attention, and to naturally elicit particular uses of language.

Content teaching of the question/answer type is limited in the range of form/function relations it naturally brings with it. For this reason, it needs to be complemented with activities that make use of functions otherwise infrequently present. Again, the activities are contrived to ensure the authentic use of language forms.

And finally, content teaching with its focus on meaning, appears to provide unsystematic, possibly random feedback to learners about their language errors. It is not clear what strategies of error correction should be adopted. Certainly research has very little to say on the topic. The strategies advocated here, however, are to provide learners with the motivation to use language accurately, coherently and appropriately by writing for, or speaking to, real audiences. Preparation to do so will usually involve a process of revising and editing, and a commitment to an error-free final product. Error-free implies that learners have conveyed their intended meaning to their own, and their teacher's, satisfaction.

Thus, to facilitate second language learning, the typical question/answer sequence found in much content teaching could be largely



substituted with carefully contrived activities, which bring into the classroom authentic language in its full functional range.

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### Note

1. Versions of this paper were presented as plenary addresses at the TESL Canada Conference in Vancouver in March, 1987 and at the TESL Ontario Conference in Toronto in November, 1987. This paper is reprinted with slight modification from the *TESL Canada Journal*, 1988, vol 6, No 1, pp. 68-83.

### References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

## SECTION FIVE FROM PRAGMATICS TO SOCIAL COMPETENCE

The final section of the book reverts to the macro level of foreign/second language pedagogy. The research projects reported on all involve detailed micro level analysis, but they also confront broad issues, for instance how change in schools is frustrated, cultural determinants of communicative competence, and the right of linguistic minorities to choose the form of education that is most appropriate for them.

The articles by Blum-Kulka and Edmondson & House both draw on the work of the Cross Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), to which Claus Færch was also attached (see note 1 in Blum-Kulka's article for details, and her bibliographical references). The papers demonstrate how empirically-based projects (with corpora of samples of the language of native speakers as well as of interlanguage) can not only lead to insights which may be of direct relevance to foreign/second language pedagogy but also advance theoretical knowledge. They are also testimony to the advantages of teamwork in research of this kind (also a guiding principle for Claus Færch's work). Such teamwork should ideally involve scholars from a variety of disciplines, as was the case in the project which Skutnabb-Kangas's article draws on.

Blum-Kulka presents a model for the study of interlanguage pragmatics which significantly expands interlanguage to embrace interculture. She focusses on the pragmatics of 'requests' and presents a comprehensive analysis of relevant constraints (level of proficiency, transfer from L1, perception of target language norms, length of stay in the target community). Among the many findings reported is evidence that the speech acts of bilingual English-Hebrew communities, immigrants to Israel from the USA, differ significantly from both Israeli and American patterns. Their pragmatics is authentically *intercultural*, with features which differentiate it from source and target culture. Blum-Kulka distinguishes three developmental stages in the emergence of IL prag-

matics: a message-oriented, unsystematic phase, thereafter an IL oriented, potentially systematic phase, and ultimately an interculturally oriented, potentially systematic phase. This phase is characterised by pragmalinguistic unacceptability so far as the norms of the target culture are concerned, but these norms are defied precisely because the learner does not wish to identify with native speaker norms, so as to preserve the intercultural identity of the individual and the group.

Blum-Kulka's research contextualises interlanguage pragmatics within the source and target language cultures and highlights the new culture which is generated by the L2 speaker. Her work thus has affinities with the work of Indian scholars (see references to Kachru and Sridhar & Sridhar in Phillipson, this volume) who criticise ESL research for ignoring the new language and culture created in language contact situations of indigenisation (English in India, Ghana, etc.). Her work also ties in with other language contact studies. Flege (1987) reports that L2 phonology influences the mother tongue phonology of American immigrants in France, and concludes that the restructuring process that regular use of an L2 entails also impinges on the L1.

Edmondson & House analyse the evidence of 'waffling' (= prolixity) in IL in connection with apologies, as well as the work of fellow researchers on requests. In both these speech acts, 'supportive' acts are normative. In view of findings elsewhere that learners tend to be more blunt rather than to waffle, it is important for Edmondson & House to explore whether waffling could be an artefact of the research design (a written discourse completion questionnaire, rather than native speaker/learner interaction). They reject this explanation, but do not rule out the possibility that waffling could reflect learners' perception of their social status as learners. Edmondson & House favour a psycholinguistic explanation: learners' waffle is part of their compensatory strategic competence, reflecting insecurity, and indicates that learners lack standardised routines to accompany requests and apologies. In this case there is no contradiction between learners being blunt in face-to-face interaction but waffling where a routinised formula would be appropriate and the norm for a native speaker. They suggest that in 'natural' second language acquisition, waffling would not be found to occur significantly. A possible implication is that language teaching should ensure that such routinised formulae are integrated into the competence of all learners, even advanced ones.

Wagner's article analyses the relationship between academic theory-building and innovation in teaching practice. He is interested in how far

the relationship is adequately captured in theory and in the social reality of inertia in the education system. The major section of the article presents an 'action analysis', working top-down, in order to clarify what happens in foreign language classrooms and why. This permits the tracing of pedagogical action to underlying theory. Empirical data is presented from classes of English and German teaching in Denmark, and widely used activities are identified. From analysis of teachers' reasons for using the activities it is apparent that in addition to teaching goals there are social goals (classroom organisation). In addition classroom discourse needs to be structured. As a result there is a mismatch between learning theories and practice. Wagner concludes that innovation must take the realities of pedagogic practice, and the diversity of goals, as its starting-point. In the final part of his paper Wagner looks at the psychology of conflicting demands being made on the teacher. This too must not be neglected when innovation is brought on to the school agenda, if both teachers and the desired innovation are not to be frustrated.

Wagner's article presents a useful theoretical framework for analysing foreign language teaching. It explicitly links theories which aim at influencing the behaviour of learners to the constraints which inhibit change and result in the preservation of the status quo.

Skutnabb-Kangas's article derives from a project exploring the ethnic identity and communication strategies of Finnish immigrant minority youngsters in Sweden. The children received nine years of schooling in Finnish-medium classes in Sweden and, unlike most immigrant children, they have excellent school achievement, with high levels of proficiency in both the mother tongue and the dominant language (Swedish). The article explores bilingual/bicultural competence, ethnicity, and integration in depth, demonstrating the need to situate language learning analysis within a broad ethnographic framework which specifically relates to the political power of the dominated and the dominant groups. The theoretical framework and research methodology are presented in some detail, as they are a precondition for understanding the research results. Examples of the youngsters' attitudes to their bilingualism and biculturalism are quoted.

Ethnic identity, communication and integration are defined as relational, rather than as characteristics of a person/group. A consequence of this is that the integration process involves the dominant group changing too. If this group demonstrates unwillingness to change, it may prevent the integration of immigrants and the development of them into ethnic minorities.

Lengthy interviews conducted with the youngsters, who functioned as co-researchers over a period of three years, and their parents, explore the ethnic identity and metacultural awareness of these members of the minority community. In the case of neither generation do their self-categorisations correspond to the (negative) 'ethnicity' which the dominant group attempts to impose on them. Labels, such as a 'Sweden Finn', may have negative or positive connotations. The study demonstrates that the youngsters are ready to integrate into Swedish society, but that this does not imply a rejection of Finnish culture or language. They are in fact developing a new 'bi-countrial' identity, and use 'ethnic strategies' in order to be able to do so in a monolingually oriented assimilationist society.

Throughout the paper Skutnabb-Kangas relates the analysis to the societal struggle of the Finnish minority community for linguistic and educational rights. Finnish-medium schooling provides ethnic minority children with the opportunity to develop a high level of bilingual/bicultural competence. Only a small proportion of the ethnic minority children are given this opportunity. The question then is whether integration for the Swedes embraces a willingness to enhance the growth of a national ethnic minority, by supporting the social organisation chosen by the minority, namely mother tongue medium classes/schools, and by themselves changing, or whether a harsher assimilationist policy will prevail.

The research reported on in each of the papers in this section is concerned ultimately with facilitating the social competence of second and foreign language learners. Social competence is, when all is said and done, what all the other constituents of communicative competence, strategic, pragmatic or whatever, contribute to. It is what successful learning or teaching lead to and confirm. It is what research into foreign and second language pedagogy should aim at achieving. In view of the complexity and technical sophistication of research in this area, we must ensure that we appreciate what the social goals of our learners are, goals which the learners themselves should have the right to formulate. This was a principle for Claus Færch. Fortunately his influence will continue to make itself felt.

Research in interlanguage pragmatics has amply demonstrated that even fairly advanced learners' speech acts regularly deviate from target language conventionality patterns and may fail to convey the intended illocutionary point or politeness value (e.g. Borkin & Reinhart, 1978; Kasper, 1981; Wolfson, 1981; Blum-Kulka, 1982; Thomas, 1983; Olshtain, 1983; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; for a review see Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989b). But though there have been various attempts to account for both the underlying processes and communicative effects of such pragmatic deviations, many of the questions in this line of research remain unanswered. My aim in this chapter is to discuss the emergence of the IL pragmatics of *requests* on the basis of accumulating evidence from both crosslinguistic and interlanguage studies of this particular speech act. The discussion is based on three hypotheses:

(1) Underlying all attempts at communication in L2 is a general *pragmatic knowledge*. The learner will be able to achieve communicative ends in the second language because she knows intuitively what communication is. Basic notions associated with the use of language in context, such as the ability to infer communicative intentions from indirect utterances, the ability to realise speech acts in non-explicit ways and a general sensitivity to contextual constraints in the choice of modes of performance are part of this *general pragmatic knowledge* (GP). The *GP* for requests is organised as a *request schema*; certain components of the schema and the principles governing their modes of combination are shared across languages.

(2) The request schema contains a language specific *pragmalinguistic component*; this component is responsible for the structure and

functions of particular requestive repertoires in given languages. The production and interpretation of requests in a second language is affected by the learner's level of pragmalinguistic proficiency. Intralingual processes of simplification and interlingual processes of transfer combine to yield non-native like request realisations. The resulting non-native like forms can be socially inappropriate and/or lead to pragmatic failure.

(3) Culture plays a dominant role in determining modes of speech act realisation. The request schema is governed by a *cultural filter* which affects the ways requestive situations are evaluated and modes of situationally appropriate forms selected.

'Requesting style' is one of the indices of a cultural way of speaking; interactional styles are culture specific. Interlanguage pragmatics represents a case of an *intercultural style* (cf. Blum-Kulka, 1988); the formation of this style is affected as much by the juxtaposition of two incongruent systems as by the particular socio-psychological perspective adopted by the learner *vis-à-vis* these two systems.

The CCSARP investigation (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989a) 1 has compared the speech act realisation of native and non-native speakers in a variety of languages and interlanguages. This design allows for at least two types of comparisons: multi-directional, cross-linguistic analyses of the modes of performance employed for one illocution in the same situation, and two-directional comparisons of native and non-native language use. The findings from the project are thus particularly suitable for examining the hypotheses posed above. The first part of the chapter presents a general request schema from a cross-cultural point of view; the second part examines the various manifestations of the schema in interlanguage pragmatics.

### The Request Schema

Requests are pre-event acts, intended to affect the hearer's behaviour. Previous studies of requests in several languages have revealed the (possibly) universal richness available in a request's modes of performance and the high communicative and social stakes involved in choice of a specific request's form (e.g. Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Brown & Levinson, 1987; Blum-Kulka, Danet & Gerson, 1985). To understand the interlanguage pragmatics of requestive behaviour, we need first to consider the linguistic, pragmatic, social, and cultural types of information



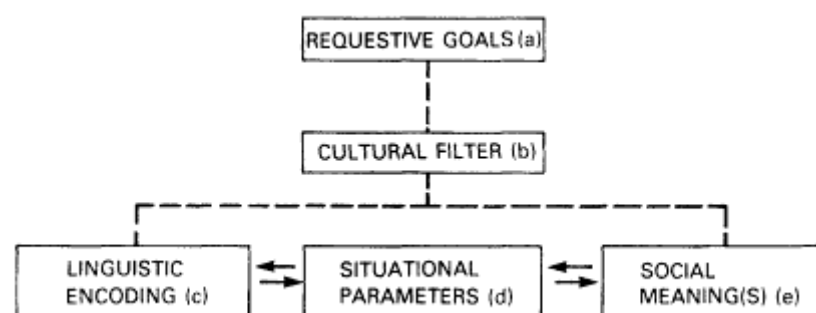


Figure 18.1  
General model of the request schema

speakers rely on in producing and comprehending requests. A general model of this 'request schema' is presented in Figure 18.1.

*Motivational Factors: Requestive Goals (A on Figure 18.1)*

The motivational, intentional source of the request is the requestive goal, which speakers strive to achieve with maximum effectiveness and politeness. Requests vary in goals from the least coercive requests for information through requests for permission and goods to the most coercive requests for action. As is well known, requests can be performed by a variety of means; hence, in choosing the means, effectiveness is important. An *effective* request is one for which the hearer recognises the speaker's intent; in other words, *effectiveness*, from the speaker's point of view, is, from the hearer's point of view, a measure of *illocutionary and propositional transparency* (Weizman, 1989). The easier it is for hearers to understand that they are being requested to do something, and the easier it is for them to understand what they are supposed to do, the more successful the speaker has been in issuing an effective and transparent request.

But effectiveness can be at odds with *politeness* (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983). The most effective way of performing a request is by being bluntly direct a strategy that in most contexts will not get a very high mark for politeness. Recent studies of politeness, though, indicate that the relationship between effectiveness and politeness is a complex one, since the most indirect way of performing a request is not necessarily the most polite one (Blum-Kulka, 1987).

Already the decision to perform a specific requestive goal is subject

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
Strategy Type	Perspective	Internal Modification	External Modification
Direct	Hearer dom.	Downgraders	Grounders
Conventionally indirect	Speaker dom.	Hedges	Cost minimisers
Hints	Hearer & Speaker dom.	Upgraders	Disarmers
	Impersonal		

FIGURE 18.2 *Linguistic encoding (c)*

to a *cultural filter* (b). Requests for information concerning salaries, for example, will be legitimate in one culture but considered taboo in another. The degree of imposition involved in a specific request for action or goods will also be weighed in culturally relative ways and in turn might lead to its avoidance or affect its mode of performance.

*Linguistic Encoding (C on Figure 18.1)*

To achieve requestive goals with maximum effectiveness and politeness, speakers must match verbal knowledge of the available pragmalinguistic repertoire with an appraisal of the most relevant situational factors. The linguistic encoding of requestive utterances relies on choices made on at least four parameters (see Figure 18.2).

*Strategy type* (A) is the essential feature of the requestive utterance. Strategy types vary by level of directness from the most direct explicit requests ('open the window'), through conventionally indirect forms ('can you open the window'), to indirect hints ('the window is open') (House & Kasper, 1981; Weizman 1985; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989b; Weizman, 1989). 2 Request strategies can be phrased from different *perspectives* (B), emphasising the role of the hearer ('do it'), the speaker ('can I have . . .'), of both ('shouldn't we close the window') or avoiding naming the agent altogether ('the window needs to be closed'). Simple requests can be elaborated in two ways: either by *internal modifications* (C) that act on the strategy proper (are embedded in the nucleus of the request) or by *external modifications* (D) that are added to the request as 'supportive moves'. Internal modifications include various types of downgraders such as 'please' and hedging devices, as well as upgrading

signals such as time-specifiers and expletives. External modifications include questions for availability as well as explanations and justifications ('grounders') for the request (for details see Appendix to Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989a).

Actual request realisations will be constrained by the *pragmalinguistic repertoire* available in any given language. As Leech (1983) says, pragmalinguistic conventions specify the ways in which particular linguistic items convey specific illocutions. Languages may differ in the repertoire they make available to their speakers for requestive purposes; for example, while the three postulated levels of directness seem to be universal, the range of sub-strategies within each level has been found to be language specific. Thus Hebrew has a conventional indirect strategy which encodes a question regarding the possibility of doing x, which has no equivalent conventional form in English (Blum-Kulka, 1989). Similarly, both the range and pragmatic functions of internal modifiers vary with language (Færch & Kasper, 1989).

Culture interacts with the linguistic encoding of requests in intricate ways. The relative coercive force of a request can be affected by socially meaningful distinctions available in one language but not in another. For example, the *tu/vous* distinction, available to speakers of Romance and other languages, can serve to mark requests for solidarity or deference (compare '*tu peux m'aider?*'/'*vous pouvez m'aider?*').

#### *Situational Parameters (D on Figure 18.1)*

Following Brown & Fraser (1979) we need to distinguish between context internal and context external situational parameters: *Context external* factors have to do with institutionalised role constellations, such as degree of social power and familiarity or medium of communication. These factors would be constant across different speech acts. *Context internal* factors are the variables specific to the requestive situation, such as the speaker's estimated legitimacy in issuing the request or other situational prerequisites for compliance, such as ability and willingness to comply (Searle, 1975; Labov & Fanshel, 1977). The *participant traits* of the addressee are a further factor to be considered. Besides obvious participant traits such as sex and age these may of course include factors such as social class, level of education, etc. For interlanguage pragmatics the single most relevant participant trait is being non-native.

Culture interferes in the appraisal of situational parameters. In the

assessment of *context external features* of social situations, variables such as distance and power can receive cross-culturally different values, e.g. the social distance between a lecturer and a student can be perceived as greater in one culture than in another (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989). Even more relevant for the learner will be cross-cultural differences in the assessment of *context internal factors*: a request that is highly legitimate in one culture, such as asking a neighbour for a ride, might be less so in another and hence the same request will require cross-culturally different modes of performance.

Cultures also differ in the degree of *conventionalisation* that operates on requestive situations. Cultures may differ in the relative social space allowed for volition, namely individual strategic linguistic manipulation, as opposed to a demand for conventional behaviour. For example, Ide (1989) claims that in Japanese society, linguistic behaviour is much more highly conventionalised than in the English speaking world. This means that in many requestive situations the Japanese speaker can follow culturally determined situationally appropriate *scripts* that determine the exact form of the request. Both type and degree of conventionalisation (choice of situations it operates on and its level of binding) can vary cross-culturally; non-natives hence are often recognisable as such by their failure to follow native-like, situationally determined requestive scripts. 3

#### *Social Meaning (E on Figure 18.1)*

This dimension relates to the degree to which a given request is deemed socially appropriate by members of a given culture in a specific situation. It is important to note that appraisals of appropriateness can be motivated by cultural belief systems in regard to valued face needs in interpersonal relations. Katriel's (1986) work on the notion of *dugriyut* (straight talk) and our work on requesting behaviour in Israeli society (Blum-Kulka, Danet & Gerson, 1985) have shown that for Israelis an emphasis on *sincerity and truthfulness* in communication overrides the importance of avoiding infringement on the other. As a result, high levels of directness are practised and licensed in situations that in other cultures would require the type of polite *redressive action* (cf. Brown & Levinson, 1987) associated with indirectness. It follows that similar linguistic choices can carry very different politeness values in similar situations across different cultures (Tannen, 1981; House & Kasper, 1981; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989).

In *empirical terms*, the model yields the following general prediction for the verbalisation of requests:

Speaker A, wishing to attain goal x, appraises the social situation S as a member of culture C1 and selects from the available pragmalinguistic repertoire R the utterance that carries the maximum effectiveness combined with politeness.

Specifically, we should find both *situational* and *cultural* variability in the use of requests. The findings from CCSARP reported by Blum-Kulka & House, (1989) indeed reveal high degrees of both types of variability. We have found that type of situation clearly affects choice of directness level: on a scale of indirectness from 1 to 9, the mean level of indirectness in five languages (Argentinian Spanish, Australian English, Canadian French, German, and Hebrew) is as low as 3.4 in the case of a policeman asking a driver to move her car ('Policeman request'), and as high as 7.1 in the case of a ride being requested from a neighbour ('Ride request'). This variation is significantly correlated with context internal and context external factors, notably with *legitimacy* and *social power*. The highest levels of directness are found in cases where the request is estimated as highly legitimate and in which the speaker by institutionalised role is dominant, as in the case of the Policeman requests. Similar results of situational variation have been obtained in laboratory experiments of requesting behaviour in German (Herrman, 1983; Hoppe-Graff *et al.*, 1985).

Our findings (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989) also suggest an interesting differential effect for the cultural filter. In certain situations, cross-linguistic differences were minimal, in others, highly marked. Native speakers in all the languages examined tended to phrase their requests for lecture notes from a fellow student ('Notes request') and requests for a ride from a neighbour ('Ride request') in conventionally indirect terms, but disagreed culturally as to the appropriate level of directness used in asking a roommate to clean the kitchen ('Kitchen request') and in the case of a lecturer asking a student to change the date of a presentation ('Lecturer request'). 4

It should be noted that the situational and cultural factors interact: while all speakers varied their requests by situation, they did so *to a culturally governed extent*. The lowest degree of situational variation was found in Australian English (showing an overall preference for 'can you' questions) and the highest in Argentinian Spanish.

From a second language learning perspective it is important to note that these findings indicate the activation of the basic components of the request schema in linguistically, situationally and culturally varied ways.

Against this background, it will be possible now to examine the extent of deviation from native use found in interlanguage production of requests.

## Interlanguage Requests

### *Interlanguage Requests: Global Features*

I am arguing, as stated in the three hypotheses presented above, that the realisation of requests in a second language is achieved via interaction between at least three types of components:

- (1) A general pragmatic knowledge-base
- (2) Degree of sensitivity to target language specific pragmalinguistic constraints.
- (3) Degree of accommodation to the target culture's socio-cultural norms.

Interlanguage request production has to derive partly from the *general pragmatic knowledge-base*. The GP component maps on to the knowledge associated with linguistic encoding, e.g. *properties of the utterance* and the basic need to adapt these to *properties of the context*. The learner comes to the task already pragmatically socialised to the availability of different levels of directness for the expression of one communicative intent, as well as to the accessibility of internal and external modes of modification for requests. These features should come as no surprise when encountered in the second language. But everything else about requests in the target language can be new and different. First, any attempt at realisation will be constrained by the learner's level of linguistic and *pragmalinguistic proficiency*. Second, at the stage at which general linguistic and pragmalinguistic proficiency allow for a choice between alternatives, the appraisal of any given social situation is complicated by the *cultural* factor: does it require different social conventions of use than would a similar situation in the native culture? Is the learner aware of such a difference? And finally, does the learner wish (consciously or not) to accommodate to target language norms of use?

From a language learning perspective, the request schema is both simpler and more complicated than from the native speaker's perspective. It is simpler, because the means available for performance are by definition limited. It is more complex, because at every decision making juncture (appraising the situation, choosing the 'appropriate' form,

estimating its level of effectiveness and politeness) two (potentially) incongruent pragmalinguistic and socio-cultural systems are being juxtaposed, and choices made are influenced by both. The result is the interlanguage pragmatics of requests, i.e. request utterances conforming to neither first nor second language conventions of use and yet indicating control of an underlying general pragmatic competence.

### *Interlanguage Indices of a General Pragmatic Knowledge-Base*

Two basic features of interlanguage requesting behaviour support the 'general pragmatic knowledge base' claim: (a) situational variability in strategy choice, and (b) situational variability in request structures.

#### (A) Choice of Strategies

Learners *vary* the strategies used by situation.

This trend was first detected with a relatively small group (43) of adult intermediate learners of Hebrew in Canada (Blum-Kulka, 1982) and later confirmed by the results from CCSARP, which in Israel involved 200 intermediate and advanced adult learners of Hebrew. The sensitivity to contextual constraints is revealed irrespective of mother tongue and, more importantly, *irrespective of level of linguistic proficiency*. The CCSARP non-natives sample in Israel consisted of university students at three levels of proficiency: low intermediate, high intermediate and advanced. The distribution of strategy types by situation proved significant at all three levels; even when the language used was barely grammatical, as often happened in the low intermediate level, the strategies chosen varied from situation to situation. For example, the general trend for both natives and non-natives was towards high levels of directness in the Policeman requests (66% direct for natives, 71% for non-natives), and quite low levels in the Notes requests (16% direct for natives, 15% for non-natives). Results from other sets of CCSARP data confirm these trends across different groups of language learners. Sensitivity to contextual constraints in choice of request strategies is also reported by Kasper (1989) for Danish learners of German, Danish learners of English and German learners of English, and by Rintell & Mitchell (1989) for learners of American English from varied native languages.

Situational variation in interlanguage pragmatics is by no means restricted to requests. Olshtain (1983) reports a parallel variation in the use of apologies by non-native speakers of Hebrew, and Beebe & Takahashi (1987) found that most (though not all) of the major semantic



formulas expressing disagreement used by Americans in different situations were also used by Japanese learners of English.

## (B) Choice of Structure

Learners vary the *inner structure* of requests situationally.

At all levels of proficiency tested, students of Hebrew vary not only the choice of directness levels by situation but also *the inner structure of the request forms used per situation*. Overall comparisons of the distribution of internal modifiers, for example, revealed no statistical differences in the situational *proportions* of their use between native and non-native speakers. Across all situations, native speakers of Hebrew used internal modifiers 21% of the time, non-natives 22% of the time (number of utterances examined was 812 for natives and 950 for non-natives). The differences between natives and non-natives on this measure are *qualitative* in nature; learners prefer different types of modifiers from those preferred by natives and make pragmalinguistic errors in their use (Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1987).

In the use of external modifiers non-natives resemble natives in the *rank order of situations* by proportion of external modification. In both groups, requests for a favour, such as the Notes and Ride requests, tend to be heavily supported by explanations, justifications and cost minimisers, while requests for action, such as the Policeman and Kitchen requests, tend to have a simpler, minus modification type structure. But it is important to add that in this case we also found *significant quantitative* differences between the two groups for four out of five situations: for each of these, learners used significantly *more* external modifiers than native speakers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). Results from other groups of interlanguages (CCSARP data) again strongly confirm these trends (House & Kasper 1987; Kasper, 1989).

## Interlanguage Pragmalinguistics

At every stage of proficiency in the second language, the learner will activate his or her pragmalinguistic repertoire to convey communicative functions in a second language. But the intricacies of pragmalinguistics are poorly understood for any language; it is only recently that this area at the interface of linguistics and pragmatics is gaining impetus as a legitimate field of inquiry (e.g. Fraser, 1987; Schiffrin, 1987). Within SLA, analysis of learners' errors has often led to new insights on the pragmalinguistic functions of specific forms in the target language. For

example, it is error analysis that revealed the functional distribution of 'excuse me' and 'I'm sorry' in English (Borkin & Reinhart, 1978) and the difference in the pragmatic functions between 'of course' (in English) and its translational equivalent in Russian (Thomas, 1983). Another source of information on pragmalinguistics is contrastive pragmatic studies of specific speech acts; such studies for requests (House & Kasper, 1981; Blum-Kulka, 1982; House & Kasper, 1987; Blum-Kulka, 1989) have revealed complex cross-linguistic differences in the pragmalinguistic constraints operating on many aspects of request realisation. No wonder that deviations from target language pragmalinguistic acceptability norms persist across different mother tongues, levels of proficiency and length of stay in the target community.

Consider the case of internal modifiers. The knowledge base for the appropriate use of internal modifiers includes information on their semantic value, their pragmatic functions *per se* as well as the grammatical and contextual constraints on these functions. For the Hebrew CCSARP data, though native speakers and learners use internal modification in similar proportions, they differ significantly in *types and form* of modifications used (Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1987).

The use of 'please' (*bevakasa* \*) in Hebrew L1 and L2 illustrates this phenomenon. 'Please' has been shown to be multi-functional, serving both as a politeness marker and as an illocutionary (requestive) force-indicating device (Blum-Kulka, 1985; House, 1989b). The complicating factor from the learning point of view is that formal criteria, such as word order, can affect the pragmatic functions achievable by 'please' on both dimensions.

We found (Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1987) a clear distinction between native and interlanguage uses of *bevakasa*\* (please): in native Hebrew, *bevakasa*\* appears mostly (66%, n = 131) either intra- or post-sententially; by contrast, in Hebrew interlanguage, *bevakasa*\* tends to appear in sentence initial position (68%, n = 141). Native speakers say '*ata yaxol bevakasa\* lehaziz et hamxonit*' (could you please move the car) or '*taziz et hamxonit bevakasa\**' (move the car please); learners say '*bevakasa\* taziz et hamxonit*' (please move the car) or, using an impersonal construction, '*bevakasa\* lehaziz et hamxonit*' (please to move the car). There are important pragmatic effects to this difference: while intra- and post-sentential *bevakasa*\* enhance requestive force and signal politeness, sentence initial *bevakasa*\* lends the request a pleading, whining emphasis, often inappropriate situationally. And indeed, native speakers are sensitive to the difference. Utterances such as '*bevakasa\* tenage et hamitbax*' ('please

clean the kitchen') are singled out by native speakers as 'non-native' (Freeman-Kay, 1988). 5

Choice of request perspective is another important source of variation for manipulating the request's degree of coercive force. Choice of perspective is one of the ways in which the native speaker signals his or her estimate of the degree of coerciveness required situationally. Ignorance of such norms creates an effect of social inappropriacy. Statistically, learners of Hebrew differ in systematic, significant ways from native speakers in preferences shown for the point of view opted for in different request situations (Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1987). Thus learners showed some reluctance in imposing on their room-mates to clean the kitchen (used significantly less hearer-oriented Kitchen requests than native speakers), while in asking a neighbour for a ride it was the learners who opted for a higher than native degree of coerciveness (used significantly more hearer-oriented Ride requests than native speakers).

Detailed analysis revealed that even when both learners and natives use the same impersonal point of view ('would it be possible to . . .') they differ in choice of lexical item, which in turn reflects a different underlying perspective. Natives would ask to borrow a notebook by saying the Hebrew equivalent of 'would it be possible to *receive* it . . .' (underlying speaker perspective), while learners phrase the request with the Hebrew equivalent of 'would it be possible *to give* me your notebook' (underlying hearer-perspective). These constructions, too, are identified by the native speakers of Hebrew as 'non-native' (Freeman-Kay, 1988).

#### *Degree of Accommodation to Target-Language Socio-Cultural Norms*

The most persistent finding of interlanguage speech act studies is that even at the advanced levels learners' speech act performance might not conform to either first or target language socio-cultural norms of use. This phenomenon is manifested by failure to conform to target language conventionality patterns (range of strategies used in a given situation), different level of directness chosen from that of native speakers and overuse of supportive moves.

In the CCSARP data for learners of Hebrew, overall differences between natives and non-natives in choice of directness levels proved significant only in the Policeman requests (Blum-Kulka & Levenston, 1987). We attribute this finding to the learners' general pragmatic knowledge, which led them to vary their choice of directness levels by situation, as discussed above. But a closer examination of learners'

performance by level of proficiency did reveal significant differences on this measure between learners and native speakers. Especially interesting is the case of learners at the highest level of proficiency, a group that is assessed by Hebrew University standards as proficient enough in Hebrew to participate in regular studies at the University. This group ( $n = 49$ ) differed in choices of strategies from natives in two (out of five) situations: the Ride requests ( $p. < 0.005$ ) and the Policeman requests. ( $p < 0.004$ ). In asking a neighbour for a ride, the learners failed to conform to the conventional patterns used by Israelis: while the majority of native speakers ( $n = 165$ ) opted for either conventional indirectness (86%) or hints (14%), the learners even at this level of proficiency used a wider range of strategies, *including direct ones* (8% direct). In the case of the Policeman requests, the advanced learners persisted in opting for *higher levels* of directness than Israelis (by + 10%). Apparently in this case the stereotype of Israelis as universally 'direct' was inappropriately overgeneralised.

In some cases, situational variability in choice of directness levels can identify learners by mother tongue even when there is no data available on mother tongue usage. The speech act performance of speakers of Arabic in Hebrew as L2 ( $n = 25$ , subjects were Arab students at Ben Gurion University) is dramatically different from that of native speakers (Shaked & Siansky, 1987; CCSARP questionnaire). Choices of directness in this group differ in all situations from those of Israelis; for example, the Arab and Bedouin subjects' Notes and Kitchen requests were highly direct (60% in Notes and 56% in Kitchen as compared to only 16% direct Notes requests and 49% direct Kitchen requests by the Israelis) while their Policeman and Lecturer requests were much more indirect than those of the Israelis (52% and 60% indirect, as compared to 13% Policeman and 3% Lecturer indirect requests in the Israeli data).

On the other hand, certain features of interlanguage speech act performance, such as overelaboration in the use of supportive moves, persist regardless of mother tongue (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Kasper, in press). This type of verbosity was found to be sensitive to length of stay in the target community; after seven years of living in Israel, the degree of request elaboration by non-natives equals that of native speakers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). Length of stay also strongly affects judgements of acceptability: while up to ten years of living in Israel, non-natives' reactions to situationally variable request patterns differ significantly from those of native speakers, after ten years of stay this difference disappears (Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985).

### *Theoretical Implications*

At this stage of the research in this area, we do not know how these various factors, namely, level of proficiency, transfer from the mother tongue, perception of target language norms, and length of stay in the target community, interact in shaping the speech act performance of any specific group of learners or second language speakers at a given moment in time, relative to communicative goal and social situation. Nevertheless, the findings suggest a general pattern of interlanguage type uniqueness in the socio-cultural aspects of learners' and second language speakers' pragmatic systems. On a more general level, there are two *complementary* lines of explanation to this phenomenon.

The first line of explanation is inspired by studies in the ethnography of speaking. This line of research has clearly shown that ways of speaking are culturally determined, differ from culture to culture and form part of the child's process of socialisation (Hymes, 1974; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Speech act performance is sensitive to culturally determined interactional styles (e.g. Tannen, 1981); hence the learner's position in a situation of contact between two possibly incongruent interactional styles is bound to leave its traces on his or her speech act performance.

A striking illustration of this process is provided by the speech act performance of American immigrants to Israel (Blum-Kulka, 1988). This group is comprised of middle- to upper-middle-class families living in Israel between 9 and 19 years. The requests issued by family members at the dinner table in this group have been compared with the dinner table requests of socio-economically similar native Israeli and native American families. All members of the immigrant families are bilingual (English-Hebrew); both languages were used at the dinner table, with English being the dominant one. But regardless of the language spoken, *the speech acts in this group differ significantly from both Israeli and American patterns*. Though the dinner table requests were all quite direct, Israelis were found to be more direct than American immigrants, and American immigrants more direct than Americans. In the American-Israeli (immigrant) families, these differences emerged for both adults and school age children and regardless of whether the language spoken was English or Hebrew. The three groups of families were also found to differ in the preferences shown for parents' modes of compliance with requests. While general levels of parent-child compliance are similar, styles of immediate response to requests differ culturally: Israelis tend to react categorically, preferring compliance or refusal over negotiation (e.g. prolonging the request sequence across several turns by asking questions).

Americans, and to a lesser degree American-Israelis, show a preference for negotiation over immediate refusal. 7 It should be noted that these differences emerged despite the common Jewish cultural heritage shared by all participants and despite the constraining effects of the speech event studied. These results show that ways of speaking in the American-Israeli families conform to neither of the cultures associated with the two languages used. They follow an *intercultural* pattern of their own, which differs in important ways from both the American and Israeli interactional styles. The American-Israeli speakers manifested their unique *intercultural style* when speaking their *mother tongue*; hence, their case provides a 'pure' example of the effects of cultural contact on language use, devoid of the intervening factor of level of linguistic proficiency.

Precisely because of this fact, the case of the American-Israelis also illustrates the workings of social psychological factors on the development of interlanguage pragmatics. The important point from this perspective is that the use of this intercultural style serves as an assertion of *cultural identity*. By the use of this style, the American immigrants to Israel dissociate themselves *both* from the American and Israeli cultures. For every individual, the intercultural style used can function as a *disidentifier* (Goffman, 1961), symbolically establishing a role distance between the speaker and his or her native interlocutors. Thus, in social-psychologists' terms (Giles, 1979; Giles & Johnson, 1987), there are good reasons why we should not expect to find *maximal convergence* to native socio-cultural norms. Being different helps to preserve cultural (or intercultural) identity as an individual and as a group; furthermore, as suggested by Janicki (1986), such convergence, when it comes from a foreigner, is not necessarily evaluated positively by the native speaker.

This line of argument provides the second, complementary explanation for the persistence of interlanguage pragmatics phenomena on the socio-cultural level. I prefer to talk of this aspect as 'the degree of socio-cultural accommodation' rather than as 'the level of socio-cultural competence'. The former term allows for choice, while the second assumes absolute, desirable levels of achievement. From the individual second language speaker's point of view, the desirable goal might be precisely *disidentification*, rather than absolute convergence. When we as researchers examine the speech act production of L2 learners, their level of pragmalinguistic proficiency interferes and might mask from us the symbolic functions achieved by deviations from target language socio-cultural norms. But when we examine the speech of experienced second language speakers (I am thinking of long-term immigrants to Israel as well as all of us ESL speakers in the international academic context) it



seems clear that, as in the case of accent (Guiora, Brannon & Dull, 1972), the interactional style used can be a marker of identity, definable in cultural, ethnic and personal terms, or minimally serve as a general disidentifier, e.g. be meant and interpreted as a marker of non-nativeness.

In sum, we can distinguish developmentally three stages in the emergence of interlanguage pragmatics.

#### Message Oriented, Unsystematic

At the beginning levels, the learner will use any linguistic and nonlinguistic means at his or her disposal to achieve a communicative end. As in the case of a tourist in a foreign land, the necessity to communicate overrides all considerations of grammaticality, acceptability and personal inhibitions in the reliance on mime and context.

#### Interlanguage Oriented, Potentially Systematic

Characterised by both grammatical and pragmalinguistic unacceptability.

In learning environments, learners acquire with time various linguistic means for achieving communicative ends. This is the stage where interlanguages develop and manifest both grammatical and non-grammatical usages; likewise, the learners' speech acts will be pragmatically and socially acceptable in part and in part unacceptable. It is to be expected that both a general pragmatic knowledge as well as specific positive and negative transfer from the mother tongue and level of pragmalinguistic proficiency will play a role in shaping speech act performance at this stage.

#### Interculturally Oriented, Potentially Systematic

Characterised by grammaticality combined with socio-cultural and possibly pragmalinguistic unacceptability.

With progress in level of linguistic proficiency, the sentences used for conveying communicative acts can become grammatically correct and still be pragmalinguistically deviant. This stage is the real justification for the claim of the persistence of 'interlanguage pragmatics'. Theoretically, if the learner is living in the target community, learning of pragmalinguistics can continue and, combined with a process of acculturation (Schumann, 1978), lead to native-like speech act performance. In practice, this process is probably activated only by most (but not all) children of first generation immigrants and a minority of adult second language speakers. In most



cases of adult second language speakers the pragmatic systems created will be inherently intercultural in nature, thereby both reflecting the juxtaposition of two cultures and serving important socio-psychological needs of the individual.

## Notes

1. CCSARP stands for Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project. The project was started in 1982, with Claus Færch as one of the initiators and active participants until his untimely death. In addition to his valuable scholarly contribution, he will be remembered for his good humour and tact that helped the CCSARP group overcome many of its difficult moments.

The project investigated request and apology realisations by native speakers and learners in seven languages and language varieties, by the use of a discourse-completion questionnaire, applying one coding scheme to all the data (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989a). The present chapter is an attempt at a reappraisal of the CCSARP findings, based primarily on results for Hebrew as first and as a second language.

2. The three levels of directness are further subdivided by the CCSARP coding scheme into nine mutually exclusive categories; the nine strategy types (on a scale of indirectness) are as follows:

- i) *mood derivable*: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force ('*Leave me alone*'; '*Clean up that mess*').
- ii) *performatives*: utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named ('I am *asking* you to clean up the mess').
- iii) *hedged performatives*: utterances in which the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions ('*I would like to ask you* to give your presentation a week earlier than scheduled').
- iv) *obligation statements*: utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act ('*You'll have to* move that car').
- v) *want statements*: utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carry out the act ('I really *wish you'd* stop bothering me').
- vi) *suggestory formulae*: utterances which contain a suggestion to do x ('*How about* cleaning up?').
- vii) *query preparatory*: utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions (e.g. ability, willingness) as conventionalised in any specific language ('*Could you* clear up the kitchen, please?'/'*Would you* mind moving your car?').
- viii) *strong hints*: utterances containing partial reference to object or element needed for the implementation of the act ('You have left the kitchen in a right mess').
- ix) *mild hints*: utterances that make no reference to the request proper (or any of its elements) but are interpretable as requests by context ('I am a nun' in response to a persistent hassler).

The distinction into three main levels of directness ((a) *direct*, comprised of strategies i to v; (b) *conventionally indirect*, comprised of strategies vi and vii and, (c) *nonconventionally indirect*, comprised of strategies viii and ix) has been empirically shown to be valid across several languages (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989b).

3. The notion of 'standard situations' (Herrman, 1983; Hoppe-Graff *et al.*, 1985) captures the phenomenon of scripted requestive behaviour from an emic, culture specific point of view.
4. For illustration, consider the situational degree of variation (in five languages) in the proportions of conventional indirectness used: Notes, 83%-99%; Ride, 78%-100%; Lecturer, 61%-92%; Kitchen, 23%-72%.
5. Freeman-Kay (1988) has randomly selected discourse-completions from native and non-native CCSARP data-base. From non-natives, only request realisations that contained no grammatical errors were included. The completions were reinserted in the discourse of the original CCSARP questionnaire (two for each item) and presented to a group of 25 native Israelis who were asked to identify each completion as native or non-native. Request realisations identified correctly by over 55% of the native speakers as 'non-native' were considered to represent interlanguage pragmatics phenomena.
6. The phenomenon of interlanguage 'verbosity' is by no means restricted to the domain of speech acts; Bongaerts, Kellerman & Bentlage (1987) report a parallel trend in L2 referential communication.
7. The rate of parent's *compliance* is 36% for Israelis and 33% for Americans; rates of *refusal* are 40% for Israelis and 21% for Americans; rates of *negotiation* are 12% for the Israelis and 45% for the Americans. In the rest of the cases the requests were ignored by the parents. This analysis captures immediate reactions only; we have some indication to suggest that negotiation in the American families precedes final refusal and not compliance, but this point needs further investigation (Blum-Kulka, 1988).

## References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

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Do Learners Talk too Much?

The Waffle Phenomenon in Interlanguage Pragmatics

Willis Edmondson and Juliane House

## Introduction

Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1986) (B-K & O) show that, on occasion, non-native speakers use 'too many words' to achieve a particular communicative goal, and suggest that 'pragmatic failure' (cf. Thomas, 1983) may well result from such verbosity. Their data is taken from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), 1 and examines 'requestive' behaviour. We wish to supplement this finding by adducing further analyses of other segments of the CCSARP corpus, including 'apologetic' behaviours. More centrally, we wish to address questions as to whether learners in fact do to any significant degree talk too much, and if so, when, and why. Our central focus is psycholinguistic: we are interested in prolixity as an index of possible learners' language processing problems, and are less centrally concerned with the issue of pragmatic error, i.e. potential hearer reactions to too much learner talk. Finally, we address, in a necessarily tentative way, the question as to what if anything might be done about what we presume to call 'the waffle phenomenon' in corrective pedagogic practice.

## The Waffle Phenomenon

We may provisionally and somewhat vaguely define waffling as excessive use of linguistic forms to fill a specific discourse 'slot' or 'move',

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i.e. achieve a specific pragmatic goal (in CCSARP, the discourse slot or move is operationalised as a turn-at-talk). This is a rough paraphrase of the everyday notion of 'waffle', which means of course that the phenomenon is not exclusively manifest in interlanguage production: some (if not all) native speakers also on occasion waffle. The interesting claim we are addressing here, however, is that learners evidence a significantly greater tendency to waffle than do native speakers. Comparable native speaker data is available inside CCSARP, such that an analysis of this native speaker data can be used to establish a quantitative norm. It is on this basis that B-K & O (1986) make their point. They use however a relatively small sample of American native speakers (28 relative to the CCSARP norm of 100+) in the only figures available in their paper in which waffling in L2 is established by direct comparison with native speakers of the learner group's target language.

The claim that learners consistently waffle is a priori surprising, as B-K & O note (1986: 170). It is surprising first of all on experiential grounds. One suspects that experience of attempting to communicate in an imperfectly mastered language, or experience of intercultural contacts in which one is using L1, or experience of foreign language teaching is unlikely to make the claim intuitively plausible. Harder (1980), for example, postulates 'personality reduction' as a subjective correlate to speaking in a foreign language, and personality reduction cannot readily be associated with utterance expansion, i.e. waffling. Secondly, it is surprising that while 'reduction strategies' are well established as a category of communication strategies in the literature (cf. e.g. Kasper, 1982), 'expansion strategies' (assuming for the moment that waffling might be so characterised) are not. Various reduction strategies are richly attested in many empirical studies (e.g. Færch, 1979; Götz, 1977; Kasper 1979; Kasper, 1981; Váradi, 1980), while the waffle phenomenon had apparently previously escaped attention.

The evidence for waffling in B-K & O derives from a careful comparison of different ways of performing requestive speech acts, and is a direct consequence of learners' over-use of 'external modification' or supportive moves (cf. Edmondson, 1981: 122-9). Supportive moves are manifested at the level of the clause or sentence. A clausal supportive move will be syntactically subordinate to the utterance which itself carries the central illocutionary thrust of the turn-at-talk (i.e. the request in B-K & O's data), while a sentential supportive move occurs contiguous to that requestive speech act (either preceding or following), without being necessary for the recognition of the requestive illocutionary point. Sub-categories of supportive moves include the 'imposition minimiser', through

the use of which the speaker tries to reduce the imposition placed on the hearer via the request (e.g. *Would you give me a lift, but only if you're going my way*) and 'grounders', in which speakers give reasons for making the request (e.g. *Can I borrow your notes? I couldn't attend the lecture yesterday*). As, then, learners make more use of such additions to the requestive core of their turns than do native speakers, and as these additions are syntactically complex, thus entailing the production of a whole string of words, the learner's discourse contributions become significantly longer, even though on other requestive feature analyses, e.g. that of 'internal modification', learners score less highly than do native speakers.

House (1989a) reports generally similar findings for requests. German learners of English use more supportive moves than the British English speakers in all five CCSARP requestive situations (figures given in Table 19.1). In 'non-standard' requestive situations, in which there is no pre-established right to make the request on the part of the speaker and no corresponding obligation to fulfil the request on the part of the addressee, the use of supportive moves by German learners of English is in especially marked contrast to their use by British native speakers. In requestive situation C in Table 19.1, which concerns a request for a lift, 85% of the learners use supportive moves, but only 40% of English native speakers do likewise, and in requestive situation E, in which a lecturer asks a student to give a paper earlier than previously agreed, 84% of the learners use supportive moves versus 60% of British speakers. House & Kasper (1987) further report that both German and Danish learners of English use consistently more supportive moves in all five CCSARP request situations than do English speakers, and also more than do German and Danish native speakers. The following two utterances (see House & Kasper, 1987: 1,283) are examples of the extreme length which can characterise German learners' requests particularly:

#### Situation C (Requesting a Lift)

Good evening. Perhaps you've already seen me once. We're living in the same street. You know, my bus has just left, and as I noticed that you have come by car I was going to ask you whether you could give me a lift.

#### Situation E (Paper to be Given Earlier)

I hope I don't interrupt your dinner ... I am just preparing my classes for the next weeks and I have found out that the speech you were

supposed to hold in two weeks would fit in much better at next week's session of the seminar. Would it be possible for you to be prepared for next week?

In marked contrast to such examples are the following not-untypical requests by British native speakers in the same situations:

Situation C

Excuse me, could you give me a lift home?

Situation E

Is there any way you could finish your paper a week early?

A tendency for learners to produce more verbose utterances has also been attested in apologies realised by German learners of English. House (1989b) reports that German learners of English make heavier use of 'expressions of responsibility' (a subcategory of supportive move) in their apologies. Thus in apologetic situation F (in which the speaker has just bumped into another car while driving), 86% of learners use an expression of responsibility, but only 57% of British speakers do so in the same situational context. Additionally, this group of learners use more 'intensifiers' of the apology in five of the seven CCSARP apology situations. Intensification is illustrated in the insertion of 'very' or 'terribly' into a formula such as 'I'm sorry'. In apology situation B (in which a student has failed to return a book), 84% of learners intensify as opposed to 55% of English native speakers (and 51% of German native speakers). The following are examples of learner and English native speaker apologies in situation F (Driver):

Situation F (Driver)

*Learner:* Excuse me, but I've had a bad quarrel with my girl-friend and this has influenced my driving conduction.

*British English native speaker:* Sorry about that, mate.

These examples show the typical tendency of learners to give lengthy (often personal and emotional) reasons for their offence, while the British native speakers tend to restrict themselves to a prefabricated routine formula. We shall come back to this feature of native speaker behaviours.

In Table 19.1 the more detailed analyses of CCSARP apologies presented in House (1989b), are summarised in terms of use of supportive

TABLE 19.1  
*Frequency of 'supportive moves' in 5 requestive and 7 apologetic situations for 3 populations: 200 German learners of English, 200 native speakers of German, and 100 native speakers of English*

Five 'request' situations:								
<i>Situation</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Total %</i>		
Learners	20	59	85	6	84	50.8		
German	1.5	13	44	15	33.5	21.4		
English	9	10	40	6	60	25		
Seven 'apology' situations:								
<i>Situation</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>Total*</i>
Learners	95.5	104.5	119	127	134	163.5	138.5	126
German	100	105	96.5	114	110	123	116	109
English	99	104	109	106	97	119	137	110

\* No. of instances per 100 subjects

moves by non-native (German) speakers of English, native speakers of German, and native speakers of British English. A 'supportive move' is here interpreted as a clausal or sentential addition to or substitute for an explicitly apologetic fixed formula or routine. Note that the figures for apology situations in Table 19.1 are utterance-token-based, rather than subject-based, such that multiple use of 'supportive' behaviour counts more than once. It is for this reason that scores in excess of 100 are common, although these scores represent average totals for 100 subjects.

The total frequency of 'supportive moves' for apologetic contexts is higher for learners than for native speakers of English, but the difference does not appear to be significant (126 versus 110), and in no way matches the discrepancy evident for requestive contexts (51% versus 25%). However, this difference serves to establish that the German learners are at least to some extent waffling. Table 19.1 reveals, however, that this waffle is not equally apparent over all apologetic situations. Indeed, in Table 19.1, the native speakers of British English produce as many supportive moves in situations A and B as do the learners. There is however a clear reason for this. Situation A in the apology table concerns a university professor visited by a student whose paper the professor has not in fact looked at, while situation B concerns a student who has not brought a book (s)he was supposed to return. In these situations, then,



the addressee is not initially aware of the offence or complainable, such that the relevant facts have to be given in the speaker's turn-at-talk. In other words, for situation A, the professor would not normally simply say 'I'm sorry', but would have to explain why, by saying for example 'I'm sorry, but I haven't got round to marking it yet'. Now the production of this information counts, in CCSARP methodology, as what we here refer to as a 'supportive move'. Therefore in these situations, all subjects are practically obliged to use 'supportive moves' if the required apology is to have any point. Clearly, if the learner wishes to waffle, (s)he may still do so, even in such a context, but the statistical significance of such hypothetical waffling is decreased, in the sense that scores of approximately 100 will count as a base norm.

Further differentiations are relevant. House (1989b) notes for example that in CCSARP situation G in Table 19.1, which centrally concerns the speaker's having insulted somebody, there is a marked tendency for learners to verbalise non-intentionality, classified in CCSARP as a substrategy of 'Expressing Responsibility' ('Come on Julia. I didn't want to insult you. You know that I tend to exaggerate things sometimes'), whereas the English speakers tend to show more 'Concern for the hearer'. In other words, the waffle phenomenon may co-exist with a tendency on the part of learners *not* to say 'the right thing', though such coexistence may disguise the waffle phenomenon, as statistically learners' 'waffle' may be not be apparent in that more normative native speaker behaviours are absent from learner productions. In the light of such differentiation, we suggest that situation-specific waffling by German learners is attested for CCSARP apology data also.

#### Additional Findings

Before we seek to interpret the results reported on above, it will be useful to adduce some additional findings, that may be potentially relevant to an explanation of waffling. Any explanatory account of waffling should at the least be consistent with these complicating factors.

A first point is that 'pragmatic transfer' does not seem to be a plausible explanation of learners' overindulgence of verbiage, as noted by B-K & O (1986: 172) and House (1989b). In the former, supportive moves were used more by American learners in Hebrew than both Americans using L1 and L1 speakers of Hebrew. In the latter case, German learners of English produced more supportive moves than do English speakers of English, and than do German speakers of German.

In House & Kasper (1987), Danish learners of English are again reported as over-indulging the use of supportive moves both with respect to British English and Danish norms established in CCSARP data. Clearly, this does not allow us to claim that waffling characterises the requestive and apologetic behaviour of *all* learners: it does however allow us to conclude that in the sets of data under consideration, waffling is exclusively an interlanguage phenomenon in terms of statistical significance, and that it occurs independently of the learners' mother-tongue.

Secondly, there is no evidence of waffling in learner data gathered in face-to-face interactional settings available to us, specifically in the role-plays used as a data-base in the Bochum project (cf. Edmondson *et al.*, 1984). Nor is there any evidence of waffling in the literature on learner interlanguage productions in interactional settings, as noted above. In general, the Bochum data established a higher degree of directness in German learner performance over a wider range of types of speech act, a lower use of internal modification, and a *similar* use of external modification (cf. e.g. Kasper, 1981). In fact, there was in this data much less talk produced in learner/native-speaker role-plays than in the two sets of native speaker/native-speaker interactions. Further, learners adopting specific roles produced consistently less verbiage in these situations than did native speakers (German or English) in the same situational roles. Clearly, however, many other factors than use of supportive moves doubtless influenced the overall length of these interactions. We are not seeking to establish positive evidence for the opposite of the waffle phenomenon, but are simply stressing that there is no evidence of that phenomenon in this data.

Thirdly, it is of particular interest that *German* learners of English waffle, in that 'directness' has been found to be a feature of the interlanguage of native speakers of German, both inside CCSARP and in the role-plays used in the Bochum project. Thus, in House (1986), House & Kasper (1987), and House (1989a) it was found that German learners of English in the CCSARP sample used the most direct request strategy, the Imperative, more frequently in standard request situations (in which there is a pre-fixed allotment of rights and obligations) than British English native speakers, and Kasper (1981) found that German learners in the Bochum role-play data used more direct request and complain variants than the British native speakers. Indeed, 'bluntness' is mentioned as a stereotypical feature of this non-native group by B-K & O (1986: 169), and 'bluntness' and waffle seem, on the face of it, contradictory characteristics. It is of course possible that bluntness and waffling can in fact be reconciled: whether this is the case or not, an

explanatory account of waffling should explain this apparent contradiction.

Fourthly, B-K & O produce evidence to suggest that degree of waffle does not correlate significantly with L2 proficiency, save that raw beginners do not waffle very much at all, plausibly because they do not have the linguistic means. Degree of waffle does vary systematically, however, with length of stay in the target language community (the subjects in this case are Americans living in Israel). As length of stay increases, so does the length of requestive turns approach the norm established for Hebrew native speakers.

#### A Rationale for Supportive Moves in Apologetic and Requestive Behaviours

It is relevant to an explanation of waffle to consider native-speaker use of supportive moves, specifically in requestive and apologetic behaviour.

Consider apologies first. Apologies are occasioned by a real or imagined offence, which may or may not have been mentioned by an interlocutor in the form of, for example, a complaint. The interesting fact about complaints for our purposes here is that while an apology is the most obviously conventionalised and 'co-operative' response, it does not in itself bring about potential exchange closure. In the terms of Edmondson (1981), if a complaint is 'proffered', it is not 'satisfied' by an apology or indeed *any* subsequent response. In everyday terms, this means that an apology has to be accepted before the complaint is conceivably disposed of. In Austinian terms, the perlocutionary goal underpinning a complaint is not transparent. For all other exchange-initiating categories of discourse behaviour, there is a sequent move which itself achieves potential closure. However, for even the most trivial real or imagined offences, for which a conventionalised apology is offered, the offended party may reject the apology, and in doing so reiterate the complaint (in the case that (s)he had already issued one), or produce a complaint, in the case that the offence had not been verbalised prior to the apologetic turn-at-talk. The reason is obvious: language cannot always make amends. Now from the offender's perspective, this means that (s)he cannot always anticipate how much reparative work in the forms of apologies, excuses, explanations of exonerating circumstances, compensatory offers and so on will suffice to remove the complainable (cf. Edmondson, 1981: 179).

So the use of supportive moves in situations where an apology is

called for is absolutely normative. The interesting question is why learners apparently overindulge such behaviours relative to native speakers, thereby producing waffle.

Supportive moves in requestive behaviour are similarly common. In this instance the supportive moves are again anticipatory, but the rationale is different. Requests are more initiating than responding discourse moves, and in making a request the speaker is (normally) strategically concerned to optimise the likelihood that the request will be complied with. Hence one commonly anticipates possible objections, excuses, questions and so on by answering them in the form of supportive qualifications, explanations and the like (cf. e.g. Edmondson, 1981: 122-36). Again, this is normative.

In both apologetic and requestive behaviours the learner apparently oversteps the norm. There is however a critical distinction to be made here between socially normative supportive behaviour and behaviours we are calling waffling. The distinction is at the same time one between CCSARP data and other learner data, (independent of the validity problems associated with the distinction between 'speaking' and 'writing as though speaking' as discourse production modes). As 'discourse completion' tasks are used in CCSARP, the addressee's response is commonly given before the subject 'speaks', i.e. fills the gap in a written questionnaire. This means that there is no room for negotiation: there is in fact no interaction occurring. Now supportive moves may and of course do occur in a single turn-at-talk in face-to-face interaction: however, the use of supportive moves is commonly occasioned by the *silence* of the addressee, or other non-verbal behaviours. It is surely common in handling face-laden interaction that the speaker monitors the addressee's reaction while talking, and makes appropriate adjustments in the light of these perceptions. Requestive and apologetic situations would seem to be archetypical for this type of turn-internal hearer-monitoring. The use of supportive moves in face-to-face interaction is then commonly occasioned by non-uptake. The waffle phenomenon is quite distinct.

If this distinction is valid, it might then be the case that for example, learner 'waffle' is not manifest in face-to-face situations, simply because the native speaker addressee takes over and assumes a turn-at-talk, such that what *could* have become waffle does not have a chance to evidence itself verbally. In face-to-face interaction, then, native speaker accommodation (or exasperation) may curtail potential learner waffle. Thus waffle may be an artefact of CCSARP elicitation procedures. The phenomenon does not thereby become uninteresting, however: possibly the opposite it may give us clues to learner processing problems that are less evident in face-to-face interaction.

*Explanatory Hypotheses*

There are two related theoretical problems that have to be dealt with before we can attempt to interpret the waffle phenomenon. Both stem from the fact that (apparently, though we need more larger-scale studies to test this), the phenomenon is evidenced in the data-elicitation procedure underpinning CCSARP, but not in learner/native speaker face-to-face interaction. The first problem is that if CCSARP elicitation tasks can produce behaviours that differ from behaviours in face-to-face interaction, we have to establish that the native speaker behaviours under CCSARP elicitation conditions do in fact constitute a norm. It is in principle possible that it is the native speakers who are producing 'deviant' behaviours in saying too little, while the learner, for whom such a questionnaire may be judged to be more of a challenge, does not adopt such a reduction strategy. Such an interpretation might be seen as consistent, for example, with the degree and kinds of humour evidenced in native speaker CCSARP data, compared with learner data (see House, 1986). The second theoretical problem is raised directly by this first one, and also concerns norms: how are we to establish whether group A is waffling, or group B is withholding? Well, an obvious first answer is to refer to other kinds of discourse data. However, it is not at all clear that a direct comparison between discourse completion tasks and interactional negotiational settings is at all feasible, as suggested in the discussion above. For example, base measuring units such as 'utterance' or 'turn' have quite different meanings in the two discourse types. Now, it could be argued that native speaker behaviours define a norm for non-native speakers regardless of this problem. But, unless we know which group is, as it were, misbehaving, we can scarcely seek to interpret learner waffling behaviours: indeed the waffle phenomenon itself may become rather trivial, as we may be seeking to understand why certain groups of native speakers are more lackadaisical in their treatment of linguistic questionnaires than specific groups of learners.

The answer to these theoretical conundrums lies, of course, not in some external quantitative norm, but in qualitative assessment of the responses elicited in CCSARP. It becomes in fact totally plausible to suggest that learners do waffle, because they on occasion say things that by any measure need not, or indeed pragmatically, should not, be said. (Cf. B-K & O (1986) on 'overinformativeness' or 'contextual explicitness'; House (1989b); and the examples given in House & Kasper (1987: 1,283).

Let us therefore assume that waffling under CCSARP elicitation

procedures occurs, and is not simply a statistical consequence of native speaker taciturnity. We may then further assume that waffling is strategic (in the sense of Færch & Kasper, 1983a). This means that a communicative plan is constantly being adjusted/qualified/expanded in the light of auto-feedback inside the learner as cognitive system, and that such strategic indecision is a reflection of the perception of a communicative 'problem'.

What then in the light of the complexities surrounding the waffle phenomenon mentioned above, *is* the problem from the learner's perspective? B-K & O (1986) suggest that waffle may be related to the learners' 'lack of confidence and eagerness to ensure that the message gets across'. They suggest that advanced learners appear to have the linguistic means at their disposal to verbalise their speech acts, but 'still feel uncertain of the effectiveness of their communicative interaction' (B-K & O, 1986: 177). House & Kasper (1987: 1,285) suggest that the strongest explanation for the waffle phenomenon is 'the insecure social status associated with the foreigner role'. Both these hypotheses are intuitively enlightening, though we need to account for the fact that such 'insecurity' is not evident in the same way in face-to-face interaction with native speakers. It would, on the face of it, seem odd to suggest that learners are more secure in face-to-face interaction than when confronted with a written discourse-completion questionnaire. Further, of course, these hypotheses are not totally distinct: 'lack of confidence', 'uncertainty' and 'insecure social status' can readily be related one to another. We would like, however, to offer a slightly more concrete, knowledge-based interpretation of this Insecurity Hypothesis.

Table 19.2 shows the distribution of conventionalised standard formulae or routines used by native speakers of English and of German, and by German learners of English in CCSARP. In these tables, extracted from published CCSARP material, the learner figures are in fact artificially high, as German learners not infrequently use non-standardised forms, as though they were conventionalised (as revealed by the very title of House, 1989b). House suggests in fact that 'excuse me' and variants of this phrase are used by German learners via transfer as pragmatic equivalents for the routinised form *Entschuldigen Sie* available in German. In other words, the learner figures include under 'conventionalised forms' tokens which are simply inappropriate in terms of native speaker usage. Similarly, in the requestive data, variations on the pattern 'Can/could you do P' occur in the native speaker data to a much larger degree than in the learner data, where more use is made of more marked formulae such as 'Would you be so kind as to'. Further, situation-specific variation occurs, as noted in House, 1989b. Consider for example Apology situation



TABLE 19.2  
*Frequency of conventionalised central moves in 5 requestive and 7 apologetic situations for 3 groups of subjects: 200 German learners of English, 200 native speakers of German, and 100 native speakers of English (percentages)*

Five 'request' situations:								
<i>Situation</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Total %</i>		
Learners	53	88	80	46	69	67.2		
German	71	99	93	27	81	74.2		
English	76	99	85	90	92	88.4		
Seven 'apology' situations:								
<i>Situation</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Learners	78	89	86	81	58	71	47	73
German	79	81	84	84	67	52	37	69.7
English	75	87	95	86	76	78	65	80.3

A (professor has not marked student's paper), for which the learner group in fact has a *higher* score than the English native speakers. This is a direct result of the frequent use of 'I'm afraid' plus propositional content on the part of native-speakers in this situation. Such usage does not count as a conventionalised apology (though it is certainly a conventionalised pattern), whereas the learners do not appear as a group to have access to this structure, using other linguistic means which may indeed count as conventionalised for the purposes of Table 19.2, but which are plausibly situationally inappropriate. The figures in Table 19.2 may therefore under-represent the point we are seeking to make: that there is a clear and marked tendency for learners to under-use such standardised expressions in both the requestive and the apologetic data. Further, comparing Tables 19.1 and 19.2, we can see 'by inspection an inverse correlation between use of conventionalised formulae, and use of supportive moves.

We suggest therefore that learners are, at least in part, 'insecure' because they do not have ready access to, and therefore do not make use of standardised routines for, meeting the social imposition of requestive or apologetic contexts, as native speakers do. Waffle is then a compensatory strategy, as learners are indeed aware of the demands of face imposed by requestive or apologetic situations, possibly especially



so, following the Insecurity hypothesis. It is significant for the purposes of our posited explanation that routines have been termed 'islands of reliability' for language learners (e.g. Dechert, 1983; Raupach, 1984; Wildner-Bassett, 1986). Clearly, the routines are *available* inside advanced learners' interlanguage systems, but the range and appropriateness of their situational application is not. In the terms of Edmondson (1987), this knowledge is not 'integrated' into learners' discourse production systems.

This hypothesis would predict that learners also make less use of routine formulae (or some types thereof) than native speakers in face-to-face interaction. For German learners of English, there is some evidence of this (Kasper, 1981), but further testing of this prediction would certainly be useful, especially as the Bochum corpus, which was used in Kasper (1981), consists of role-plays.

The 'Non-Integrated Routines' hypothesis seems further to be consistent with the features of the waffle phenomenon elaborated upon above. That Danish, German and Hebrew learners of English, and American learners of Hebrew all evidence waffling to some extent does not necessarily *follow* from our hypothesis, but is in no way inconsistent with it. In face-to-face interaction, compensatory waffle does not appear to a significant degree, as hearers uptake, interrupt, curtail, show understanding in short, interact, negotiate, or accommodate. Further, the learner has strategic options such as appeal or hesitation available in face-to-face discourse which can scarcely be used in a discourse completion task. The paradox presented by the co-existence of 'bluntness' and waffle in German learners' interlanguages disappears, as both interlanguage features may be related to a non-mastery of routines. Finally, that degree of waffle does not necessarily diminish with increasing proficiency, but does diminish with increasing length of stay in the target language culture is a supportive finding, in that lengthier exposure to target cultural norms will facilitate the integration of routines in interlanguage systems. We would in fact predict that the waffle phenomenon would not be found to occur significantly in 'natural' second language acquisition.

### Conclusion

We cannot and do not wish to rule out the possibility that learners may produce waffle under the constraints of the CCSARP elicitation procedure because of assumptions and expectations associated with their social status as learners. This is not implausible, especially if, as seems

very possible, CCSARP data is collected inside an institutional setting such as a university, even inside the setting of a language class. This factor may contribute to the occurrence of the waffle phenomenon, but we believe our hypothesis concerning non-integrated routines is primary. Following this hypothesis, the waffle phenomenon is, in one sense, a direct result of the elicitation procedures used in CCSARP, but this does not make CCSARP results invalid, though it may mean that these results require careful interpretation.

Following the interpretation of the waffle phenomenon offered here, we are faced with the interesting notion that (highly advanced) learners do not trust relatively simplistic standardised utterance tokens to do relatively face-laden interactional tasks: they prefer to indulge in verbosity, not knowing how else to come to terms with situational demands. A further effect is that, certainly for requests and apologies, the type-token relationship in a specific situation may be *greater* for learners than for target-language native speakers. In short, 'creative construction' may lead to rather unsuccessful communication, while a more behaviouristic mastery of standardised utterance tokens and their integration into behavioural schemata would be much more effective in communicative terms, and would lighten the cognitive load for the non-native learner (cf. Edmondson, 1986). There is a balance to be maintained here, and pedagogic practice may need to restore it, substituting some focus on routinised forms of expression for an undue focus on original or content-oriented utterances. Routines are the basis for creative language use in first language acquisition: maybe the same should hold for second language learners also.

#### Notes

1. In CCSARP (see Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989a), native and non-native data in seven different languages and language varieties was obtained via the use of a discourse completion test, which contained five request situations and seven apology situations. In the test, each situation was presented in the form of a short description followed by a dialogue from which the crucial speech act (the request or the apology) was missing. Informants were asked to fill in a request or an apology in the context of the dialogue provided. The utterances thus elicited from the respondents served as the unit of analysis, and both requests and apologies were analysed in the various languages along identical dimensions (for details see the Appendix in Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989a).

References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

20

## Innovation in Foreign Language Teaching

Johannes Wagner

## Overview

This paper deals with the problem that new trends in linguistics and language teaching theory do not automatically lead to innovation in teaching routines. 1 Resistance to change hampers innovation. I deal with this topic in the first section. In the following sections, I discuss two different types of resistance. The first has to do with structural aspects of pedagogical action in school and will be developed at length. The second is concerned with psychological aspects of innovation and will be summarised rather briefly.

## Preliminary Remarks

*A Historical View of Teaching Methods*

Research on foreign language teaching and learning<sup>2</sup> has been closely connected with the history of innovation in language teaching. New developments in linguistic theory and language learning theory have repeatedly fostered new methods in foreign language teaching, for instance: Jespersen and other scholars developed the direct method as an attempt to modernise foreign language teaching in accordance with the linguistics of their time. Structural linguists in the USA invented the audiolingual method. Guberina is the godfather of the audiovisual method. A cognitive approach to modern language teaching was influenced by the emerging generative grammar. Pragmatics and research into language functions have influenced the communicative approach, including the

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variety marketed by the Council of Europe.

The relationship between a scientific discipline and educational practice has often been described as knowledge transfer from research to teaching. The term 'teaching methods' refers to theories and models of instruction that are research based. It is due to this derivational relationship that methods can develop normative power, since teaching procedures in principle can be traced back to the underlying theory which decides what is right and what is wrong. Theories of language acquisition and teaching used to be fairly simple, and therefore methods could emerge as well-defined patterns of teaching activities and techniques.

In the late 1970s the world of language acquisition became complicated. Cognitive theories appeared on the scene and described complex patterns of language use and acquisition. As a consequence the normative power of methods as patterns of teaching techniques seemed to be broken and the age of a hundred prospering flowers seemed to have come. While in the case of methods, experts defined what was right and wrong, now the patterning of teaching activities was at least partly defined by teachers themselves.

The trend changed again in the 1980s. The renewed interest in methods, as for example suggestopedia, the silent way, total physical response, and the humanistic approach, indicates that there is still a demand for recipes. Yet methods are no longer developed by knowledge transfer from linguistics theories, but from the new age of theories of social interaction and learning.

The succession of methods can easily be shown in periodicals and books on language teaching. What was really happening in the classrooms through the ages of shifting methods is much more opaque. Did teachers really change their teaching according to what the experts said? Did methods have a direct impact on teaching routines? To put it in a more generalised form: Is the change in theories reflected in changed teaching behaviour? Did and do new methods lead to innovation in the school? And, if so, in what way? To answer these questions, we have to look for empirical evidence.

The growing body of research into classroom interaction in recent years makes it possible to evaluate changes in teachers' behaviour on empirical grounds. Classroom research has shown that teachers do not follow well-defined methods but use a variety of teaching techniques. This has often been referred to as the eclectic approach, where teaching activities like those of the grammar-translation method already criticised by Jespersen (1904) nearly 90 years ago are used side by side with

elements of the direct method or communicative exercises. Heterogeneity of teaching activities used is a prominent feature, to judge by classroom research. Another remarkable feature of classroom interaction is that the role of the teacher is still central. Teachers' interactional styles may have changed, but the majority of studies show that classroom interaction is heavily centered around the teacher. These observations have been confirmed by teacher trainers, who report that the daily routines in schools change slowly.

We have to conclude that the impact of well defined methods on routines of daily teaching has been weak. Language teaching traditions in schools tend to be extremely inert, and as I shall argue, this appears to be due to strong resistance to innovation. In the following sections a number of reasons for such inertia in language teaching will be examined.

#### *Methods and Method: A Crucial Distinction*

A central distinction in my analysis is between *methods* and *method*. *Methods* are well-defined patterns of teaching techniques. The concept of *method* refers to all the things which really happen in the classroom. Earlier in this paper I have called this the eclectic approach.

The distinction between methods and method is crucial for foreign language teaching, where the development and evaluation of methods has been a permanent topic in books and periodicals. While methods follow the logic of linguistics and/or psychology, method is eclectic. Its structure follows the logic of teaching in an institution. The contradiction between the logic of language teaching methods and the logic of teaching inside an institution is a major source of resistance to methodological innovation.

My arguments are based on empirical studies of classroom research in different branches of the Danish school system. 4 The situation in Denmark may be special. Unlike other school systems, Denmark has no binding national curriculum and teachers have freedom of method. This goes together with a flat power structure a general feature of politics and society in Denmark. Innovation cannot be enforced by school authorities. Teachers have to be convinced by new educational products and procedures before they are willing to incorporate them into their daily routine. These preconditions strengthen method in contrast to methods, since teachers in Denmark are more in control of their own work than in other school systems. However, a negative effect may be

that there is more inertia in a system like the Danish one than in more hierarchical systems.

Yet resistance to innovation is not a specifically Danish feature. It has been described as existing in other countries as well (Hurst, 1983), and the growing literature on classroom research in modern language teaching shows related problems for other school systems (cf. Bolte & Herrlitz (1986) for the Netherlands; Kasper (1986), Wagner & Petersen (1983) and Wagner (1983b) for Denmark; Lörcher (1983) for West Germany).

### *Models for the Relation between Research and Teaching*

According to the model of knowledge transfer, knowledge is produced in research and transferred to foreign language teaching in schools, where it leads to innovation. One example of this model is found in Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson (1984). Here an 'analysis of learner language' is the starting point, leading to 'theories of language learning' and further to teaching objectives, selection of content, teaching principles and classroom activities (Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson 1984: 10f). Changes in teaching are seen as the outcome of new developments in research.

This model runs into serious difficulties when it tries to explain unsuccessful innovation in teaching. It has to fall back on such explanations as: 'Inertia results from malfunction inside the institution', or 'It is due to the lack of motivation and ability of the teachers'.

The concept of the application of theories is basically the same idea as the model of knowledge transfer: theories are applied to social reality. Unsuccessful innovation is analysed as the faulty application of theories.

As a remedy to unsuccessful innovation, better in-service training of teachers is demanded. This of course is always a good idea, but it will not solve the problem inherent in the knowledge transfer model, namely the idea of application. As long as research in foreign language learning aims at theories about idealised human abilities, and as long as its findings are intended to be transferred to teaching encounters, the problem of deducibility exists, i.e. the conditions for deducing statements about teaching from a more or less clinical theory have to be defined. Strictly speaking, the basic notion of the model of knowledge transfer is idealist.

In this paper I will offer a different approach, based on the



distinction between method and methods. Since both follow a different logic, results from linguistics and research on language learning will not fit into the conditions of teaching. In terms of schema theory, methods can be viewed as developing schemata for pedagogical actions. These schemata only cover part of the complex social interaction which is going on in the teaching situation. Method follows a different schema. As a consequence, methods are restructured according to the schema of method, resulting in different forms of innovation than expected from the viewpoint of methods.

Innovation is part of social change; hence models for innovation have to be related to sociological theory. An approach of this kind is suggested by Jakobsen (1988; 1989). She uses the notion 'identity of an institution', i.e. the way the institution conceives of itself, as a basic concept in her argument against idealised models for implementing change. The concept of institutional identity permits description of how the educational goals and tradition of a given institution frame possible changes. Learning in social institutions like schools is always defined in relation to certain social groups and their goals. Models of innovation have to cope with this. Forced innovation which is in conflict with an institution's educational identity may lead to what Hurst (1983: 16), in a review of the extensive literature on educational innovation, Calls 'token adoption (. . .) with teachers professing to have changed their practice, but actually carrying on as before'.

My arguments complement Jakobsen's approach. Innovation in foreign language teaching must be seen not only in relation to institutional identity but also to the interaction and psychological developments of the agents of the institution. In the next section I will discuss interactional aspects of innovation in the classroom and in the following section sketch a model for a psychological analysis. The next section is based on action that I will analyse, and the following section is based on Laing's concept of psychological knots (Laing, 1971).

### Structural Problems of Pedagogical Action in Schools

In this section I will describe the reasons for system inertia which are rooted in interaction. To begin with, a model based on action theory will be outlined. This framework will then be applied to the analysis of foreign language teaching.

### *A Model for Pedagogical Action*

Classroom analysis has emerged from discourse and/or conversational analysis. Typically it works bottom up, starting by defining acts as pawns in the game of discourse, and works its way up to higher levels of analysis. In contrast to this, my approach is based on action analysis and works top down. It is derived from the work of Rehbein (cf. Rehbein, 1977; Ehlich & Rehbein, 1987). To describe the model, an example from outside the classroom has been chosen.

#### Basic Concepts for the Analysis of Actions

In a simplified version the model generates a structure as follows: an interaction consists of different levels of action. A level is constituted by elements of the level below. The action 'to go shopping' will serve as an example.

For me personally shopping consists of several sub-actions: taking the car out of the garage, driving to the nearest supermarket, buying things, taking them home. On a Saturday morning a coffee break and a chat with friends who pass by may be part of the shopping. These actions again may be complex in the sense that they are composed of actions on a lower level. Buying things is realised by entering the supermarket, looking for a trolley, collecting several things, paying for them. Again these actions may be complex, composed of different physical activities: you can pay cash or write a cheque or pay by card. For the present purpose further levels of action need not be detailed. Action is characterised by goal and function. In the example of writing a cheque, paying for things bought is the goal. It has a function relative to the higher-order goal 'shopping'. In my terminology goal is reserved for the intended outcome of an action, while function connects an action with other actions, and refers to a goal on a higher level. If several actions constitute an action on a higher level, they have a distinct function with respect to the higher goal.

At this point it is necessary to distinguish between the *agent* and *observer* of an action. Seen from the agent's perspective s/he normally acts meaningfully, since his/her actions have goals and functions. An observer, on the other hand, has to infer goal and function from the perceived activity. S/he will interpret activities by using contextual information and cultural knowledge.

To sum up the crucial points: According to action analysis, the action at the top level is determined by a goal. In the case of complex

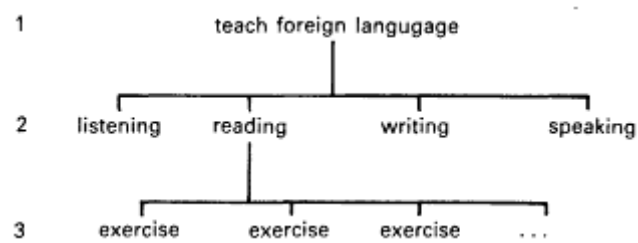


Figure 20.1  
A functional model of foreign language teaching

actions the next level consists of several actions which together realise the superordinate actional goal. In this way an action may be realised by other actions and may itself have a function for higher-level actions.

### The Logic of Methods

The suggested framework will be used for analysing foreign language teaching, with the intention to bring the functions of teachers' actions into focus. This goal differs from a discourse-analytical approach to classroom research. According to discourse analysis, the researcher asks *what is happening in classroom discourse?* Action analysis asks *what is happening and why?* Approaches based on discourse analysis typically do not interconnect teachers' intentions with the things that happen in the classroom. The function of the teacher's activity is seldom reconstructed and as far as I can see never evaluated in relation to other data. Often the analysis goes no further than the description of classroom activities and does not connect them to a theory of pedagogical action. In this sense, it is an analysis from the bottom up. By contrast, action analysis examines interaction in the classroom from the top down and in this way results in a description of pedagogical action.

The model has several levels (see Figure 20.1). At the top is the goal of *teaching a foreign language*. At the next level we define goals which together fulfil the goal of language teaching, i.e. they have a function in relation to the overall goal. These goals are classically the four skills: *listening comprehension*, *reading comprehension*, *speaking* and *writing*. This level will be referred to as *lesson*.<sup>5</sup> Each lesson again has sub-goals. The third level contains different types of exercise which implement the goals of the second level.

For exemplification I will apply this model to the teaching of reading

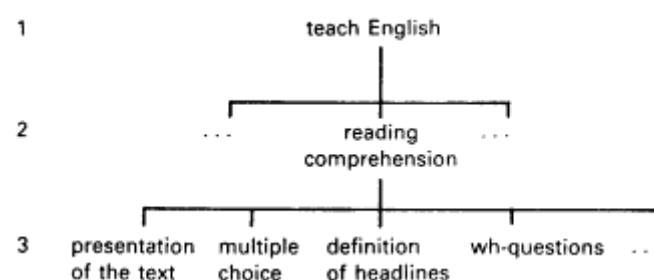


Figure 20.2  
Reading comprehension as a teaching goal

comprehension as a sub-goal of teaching English (see Figure 20.2). Reading comprehension has traditionally been trained by several teaching activities (exercises) as for example:

- answering multiple choice questions
- definition of headlines for paragraphs
- answering wh-questions

The presentation of a text precedes the different exercises. Its function is to prepare the exercises that follow. The function of all exercises is the teaching of reading comprehension. The logic of methods is the selection and sequencing of different exercises in different lessons and sequences of lessons. The ultimate goal of methods is that any activity in the classroom be subject to language learning goals according to the method chosen. In an action-based model of methods, lessons are clusters of methodologically defined activities which serve the training of language skills like listening, speaking, reading, writing. A lesson consists of a cluster of different exercises which again are clusters of tasks. Exercises are the central language teaching activities.

Methods have the structure:

Activity A has the function F  
as realisation of goal G because of T

where F is derived from G, the ultimate goal of foreign language teaching. T is the linguistic and/or psychological theory which a method refers to. To give two examples:

In the audiolingual method, we can put the following variables into the formula: A = imitation, F = automatisisation, G = oral production, T = behaviourism.

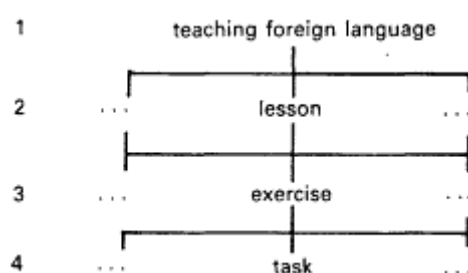


Figure 20.3  
Levels of action in foreign language teaching

In a communicative approach, A may be paraphrasing a text. This may serve as preparation (F) for other exercises which aim at free oral production (G) on the basis of a problem solving approach to language learning (T).

Looking further at one single exercise we see that it can be implemented in different ways. *Questions to the text* may be addressed to one pupil with the whole class as audience, or they may be given to several learners for group work. The questions may be written down for homework or improvised by the teacher during the lesson. Hence the analysis has to account for one more level, that of *tasks*. There is no need to integrate deeper levels of physical actions into the analysis.

Classroom analysis has shown that *task giving* follows a 'highly conventionalised structure. The pattern consists of three parts.

- (1) The teacher formulates the task and then nominates an individual learner.
- (2) The learner tries to solve the task. This step may have different embedded steps if the learner cannot solve it adequately. Repair of learners' utterances is part of this step.
- (3) The pattern ends when the teacher accepts the solution. S/he can do this more or less explicitly.

The model thus operates with four levels'. From bottom to top these are task giving, exercises, lessons, and teaching of a foreign language (see Figure 20.3).

We can now reformulate the function of methods according to this model. Methods define a specific model for lessons aiming at the teaching of different language skills. Furthermore methods define exercises which implement the goals of the lessons. For most methods the level of task

is out of focus. This may be the reason why variation in task giving is highly restricted in classroom interaction.

### *The Logic of Method*

First, two examples from my material on classroom communication will be described, focussing on lesson types and exercises (teaching activities). None of these examples are avant-garde teaching, but 'normal' routine instruction. Then, teachers' reasons for the teaching activities chosen will be discussed.

#### Examples

The first example is from the 7th year of English in the first grade of a Danish high school (gymnasium). The period is divided into two lessons. The first lesson is textwork and consists of two parts, the second lesson deals with grammar.

*Lesson 1, part 1:* A text, prepared by the learners at home, serves as input. Comprehension is checked by means of an exercise: a learner reads a part of the text aloud. The teacher asks questions about the text, which are answered by the learner. Then another part of the text is read by another learner.

*Lesson 1, part 2:* A new text serves as input. The goal is comprehension of the text. The teacher reads the text aloud. She clarifies the meaning of words in the text and partly translates it. Afterwards several learners read parts of the text aloud.

*Lesson 2:* The second lesson is on grammar. The learners work with the grammar book and complete several fill-in and transformation exercises.

This structure of a period is common in the higher grades in the Danish school system. 6 Foreign language teaching comprises primarily the reading of texts and training in the comprehension of fairly difficult texts, secondly consciousness-raising about rules of grammar and their automatisisation through grammar rules.

The second example is from the 5th year of German in the 1st grade of a Danish gymnasium. The period contains one text lesson consisting of three parts.

*Part 1:* The learners have prepared a text at home and ask questions about unknown words and difficult parts of the text.

TABLE 20.1  
*Relating activities to methods*

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Methods</i>
reading aloud	phonetic training	direct
filling in an element	pattern training	audiolingual
permuting an element	pattern training	audiolingual
translating	translation	grammar-translation
presenting a grammatical paradigm	memorising	grammar-translation
role play	automatisation in interaction	audiovisual
role play	learning in meaningful contexts	communicative
talking about a text	speaking	approach direct

*Part 2:* The second part involves an unknown text. The learners read the text aloud and translate parts of it. The teacher asks content-related questions about the text which check and support reading comprehension.

*Part 3:* The last part is a teacher-directed interpretation of the text.

Both examples are from classes with high intermediate learners. At this level, the class periods usually consist of one or two standard lessons: on text and on grammar. In my data these two types of lessons are the core of beginner teaching as well. There is a small range of standard exercises:

- reading aloud
- questions on the text (check/support comprehension)
- content questions (interpretation)
- pattern drill-type grammar exercises
- grammar presentation
- translation

Historically some of these activities derive from specific language teaching methods. Others have 'always' been used in language teaching, i.e. originate from the teaching of Latin, and have been adopted by methods. This is the case for reading aloud, which Jespersen (1904) re-designed by a well-defined methodology (see below). Table 20.1 relates some frequent exercises to the methods they originally were parts of. The label 'grammar-translation' refers to traditional teaching.



As can be seen, method combines elements from different methods. Its logic cannot be that of methods, since teachers combine elements from different origins which to a certain extent are incompatible with regard to their theoretical foundations. In many classrooms, audiolingually based automatisisation drills are used on a par with citations of grammar paradigms from the grammar-translation method and with communicative exercises.

Teachers' Explanations for Their Method

In order to reconstruct the logic of method more accurately, we have to understand the functions of exercises. To this end, I have asked teachers for explanations of the activities used in their teaching. Typically two types of explanation were given: those which explicitly referred to language learning and those which were mostly concerned with the social organisation of the class.

Tables 20.2 and 20.3 list the arguments given by the teachers for two types of exercise, reading aloud and translation.

In my data reading aloud is the most frequent activity in the classroom. As mentioned above it is often claimed to serve phonetic training, and thereby ascribed relevance to language learning. Jespersen (1904) suggests a procedure where the teacher reads the text aloud first, giving the learners a phonetic model. The basic idea is learning by example. The interesting thing for my argument is that teachers rarely follow Jespersen's sequence. Learners often read aloud without first listening to a model. Thus the activity is no longer connected with a learning theory.

TABLE 20.2  
*Arguments for using reading aloud*  
*Activity    Second language teaching    Other reasons*

reading aloud	phonetic training	to start period
		to calm down learners to refresh context to warm up to focus attention to connect several lessons necessary for examination

TABLE 20.3

*Arguments for using translation*

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Second language teaching reason</i>	<i>Other reasons</i>
translation	to train translation	to check homework necessary for examination
	to clarify the meaning of words	to check understanding of text and vocabulary to calm down students to focus on text to refresh context

Other reasons mentioned by teachers have to do with the organisation of learning. There seem to be three types of reasons:

- (1) Reasons connected with the organisation of the teaching period. Before the teacher can start a discussion about a text, all learners have to know what the text is about.
- (2) Reasons related to discipline and the social organisation of the class. After breaks or even during the teaching period learners sometimes have to calm down.
- (3) Reasons relating to the institution. For instance, reading aloud may be part of the examination ritual.

The same arguments are heard with respect to translation, even if translation is a goal in itself for some teachers. But in general teachers specify the same four types of reasons: language learning, organisation of time and of discipline (getting the class to work and keep it working), and examinations. Aspects of organisation of time will be discussed later.

Discourse Structure of the Teaching Period

One central problem in the organisation of teaching in an institution is the contradiction between the idealised structure of pedagogical action defined by methods and the agenda of the teaching period. All teaching activities have to be sequenced in a period of 45 minutes and this has its own dynamics. The structure is indicated by verbal and non-verbal marking (gambits and body movements).

As any communicative encounter, the teaching period consists of three basic parts: an opening, a central part, comprising the language teaching proper, and a closing.

The second and, obviously, longest part again includes several parts

(lessons) which in turn are structured into start, middle and end.

The crucial point is the start of an activity, because this is a transition point which has to be marked. Several times during a period the teacher faces the same organisational problem: how to get the whole class to shift attention to a new topic. This Can be achieved by foreign language activities, such as reading aloud.

*Conclusion: Interactional Aspects of Innovation*

Methods are systems of action which are structured along a single line of goals. The method a teacher uses is a complex structure which bundles together different interactional structures. Any activity has to fulfil several functions for different goals. Teachers' explanations for their teaching activities make it clear that these activities combine language teaching goals, social goals with respect to classroom organisation and discourse functions, i.e. goals which are derived from the sequencing of activities inside a class period. Method is the realisation of foreign language teaching methods in terms of discourse in the classroom and in the institution. Method is not the application of methods.

We can now take a closer look at the conditions which make elements of methods useful for method, i.e. determine how the teacher selects activities.

New elements may be integrated into method

if they have a background in one of the methods which are developed for foreign language teaching, i.e. if there is an 'ideological' superstructure which labels the exercise as a meaningful activity in foreign language teaching, and

if they at the same time can be used for the social organisation of the class.

It appears that the first condition may easily change into a myth. The case of reading aloud shows that language teaching arguments for the use of an exercise may not be valid any more or cannot be valid for the specific form an exercise has in the classroom. There is no doubt for example that reading aloud is used so frequently because it is suitable for classroom organisation.

The integration of new activities into method follows two steps:

(1) New activities may be accepted if they are able to fulfil different

functions and serve the complex of goals which teachers have. They must be based on new teaching or learning theories.

(2) Once accepted, these activities will undergo a process of ideologisation, i.e. the explanation for the activities is no longer part of methods. Since methods are norms of action based on scientific theories, the process of ideologisation severs this relation. The ideologisation of activities is evident if an activity is evidently useful for social organisation in teacher centered interaction, but can hardly be justified by a learning theory. A case in point is the use of translation.

This analysis provides insight into factors which can determine the successful planning of innovation in foreign language teaching. The criteria have to emerge from the teaching situation and not from learning theory or linguistic theory. New activities have a chance of winning a place in the method if they are able to fulfil different goals in a teaching situation. Hence we can conclude that innovation in foreign language teaching will not take the form of a paradigm shift, but will be a smooth replacement of old-fashioned activities by new ones. There is a dangerous element in this process: new activities may lose their potential for change, since they are taken out of the logic of their source, and may therefore end up well integrated in old-fashioned teaching routine.

#### Psychological Aspects of Innovation

In the previous section I have explained system inertia as rooted in the complexity of interaction. Agents of the institution have to combine several goals in single actions. But it is essential to remember that innovation is more than social and interactional changes. Innovation is also contingent on the processes of psychological change in the people involved. Therefore it is necessary to combine the analysis of interaction with that of psychological processes. For this purpose, an approach described at length by Wagner *et al.* (1984) will briefly be reviewed. It examines the genesis and disentangling of psychological knots (Laing, 1971).

In this approach, psychological norms are the basic category. Individuals follow norms and evaluate their own and other people's actions in relation to norms. Under certain circumstances norms may petrify into psychological imperatives, i.e. clear-cut definitions about what to do and what not to do, about what is good and what is bad. While norms can be negotiated and violated, imperatives are binding obligations.

Knots emerge when an individual holds imperatives which are incompatible with reality or with other imperatives. Knots are contradictory obligations which cannot be solved *ad hoc* and trap the individual. If a situation activates contradictory norms, a psychological conflict results. If a situation activates a knot, the individual gets into a psychological dilemma.

Wagner *et al.* (1984) distinguish between imperatives which are in opposition to perceived reality (as it is now, as it 'will be in future, or as it has been before), and those which are contradictory to other imperatives. In the first case the individual cannot follow the psychological imperative because reality does not allow it. In the second case one imperative demands a certain action, another imperative another and both actions are incompatible. As Wagner *et al.* demonstrate, knots paralyse changes of behaviour. Individuals with contradictory imperatives feel powerless, they are frustrated and not open to change.

The introduction of new methods and teaching techniques may be perceived as necessitating a certain type of teaching. In this case, innovation has taken the form of psychological imperatives and faces the problem of knots. We can distinguish R-knots, I-knots and E-knots:

- (1) If there is a contradiction between an imperative derived from a new method and perceived reality in the teaching institution, R-knots will appear.
- (2) Contradictory imperatives will lead to I-knots.
- (3) Contradictions between teachers' own experiences and a new method result in E-knots.

R-knots have to do with more or less implicit assumptions of methods about the context of teaching: often methods are not designed for certain institutions, but are supposed to work 'in general'. Consequently methods idealise the context of teaching with regard to a number of factors, including the learners' motivation, number of learners, size of classroom, language ability of learners and teachers, and so forth.

An example of an R-knot can be formulated as

I should get every learner to talk much more,  
but that is impossible with 30 learners in my class.

Teachers who work in classes with that many learners, with tables bolted to the floor and without themselves being fluent in the target language, quite naturally perceive a contradiction between institutional reality and idealised presuppositions about teaching contexts in certain methods.

Another type of an R-knot is the contradiction between imperatives

derived from a certain method and examinations. Even contradictions between certain methods and official goals of an institution may lead to R-knots. For example the teacher of LSP may be trapped in an R-knot between a famous new method and the learning goals of LSP:

I should get the learners to talk much more,  
but for my learners it is essential to write letters.

I-knots result from conflicting imperatives. One of the best-known examples is what teachers often perceive as an opposition between accuracy and fluency. This I-knot may be formulated as follows:

I should get every learner to talk much more,  
but then I cannot correct all errors.

In this case both imperatives refer to learners' interlanguage and are perceived as incompatible. This knot is closely related to another perceived contradiction, that of grammar teaching versus teaching of communication.

E-knots may be the result, if teachers are not able to relate a new method to their own learning-biography.

I should get the learners to talk much more,  
but I learned English perfectly well by translation exercises,  
so why shouldn't they.

E-knots pose a special problem since they hide several traps which complicate disentangling. With respect to the E-knot named here, it may be the case that teachers do not perceive central factors in their own learning. For example the teacher may have been the only learner in his/her own class who learned English well, or s/he may have learned English outside school without realising it.

To undo E-knots it may be necessary to discuss the teachers' self-assessment. This is not an easy task in inservice teacher education, as teachers may perceive a discussion of their own professional attitudes and actions as severe criticism and develop resistance to untying the knot. Or the teacher may feel that s/he is being accused of not speaking the foreign language well enough.

The result of all these knots is the preservation of the status quo and teacher frustration. Old-fashioned teaching will continue, but with lack of satisfaction and worry on the part of the teacher. Teachers react differently to this situation: they may feel insecure about what they are doing, they may dislike it, or they may reinterpret what they know about methods and feel that they are doing exactly what the new method calls for.

Knots have to be disentangled, but how? Wagner *et al.* (1984) suggest a therapeutic way such as tracing imperatives back to the norm they come from. When traced back, the transformation of norm to imperative has to be inhibited, since norms can be changed but imperatives cannot.

### *Conclusion*

By way of conclusion, let me specify some consequences emerging from the analysis of structural and psychological resistance to innovation:

Models for innovation do not match reality as long as they are based on models of knowledge transfer from methods to method. This model is not useful, since the institutional context of teaching is not taken into consideration.

Innovation based on knowledge transfer models severs the connection between exercises and their theoretical foundations, because exercises will be restructured under the domain of method. Innovation of this type will remain purely ideological.

Ideological adoption of new activities may directly lead to psychological imperatives.

Innovation must be based on an analysis of teaching conditions in an institution, i.e. of official and less official goals connected to teaching and learning as social activity.

Theories about language and language learning ought to be part of realistic approaches to innovation, but they are not sufficient on their own.

Task giving as the most routine level of interaction has to be put in focus. Innovation of method has to focus upon this level by reestablishing the connection between task giving and the overall goal of teaching.

New methods have to define their conception of teaching right down to the level of task giving, if they intend to be more than purely ideological.

Teacher training has to start from the complex reality of institutions and teachers' perceptions of them. Teacher training has to elaborate and develop the complex schema of teaching foreign languages.



Notes

1. I am grateful to Karen Sonne Jakobsen for a thorough discussion and criticism of the points made in this paper. Thanks too to Margaret Malone and Gabriele Kasper for help to make the English readable.
2. For the purpose of my argument it does not seem reasonable to distinguish between foreign and second language teaching. Neither is a distinction between learning and acquisition useful in this context.
3. This applies to the European context. The situation in the USA may have been different.
4. For the present study, the classroom observation data documented in Wagner & Petersen (1983) have been re-analysed.
5. For the purpose of my argument, 'lesson' is defined as pedagogic action. The standard teaching unit of 45 minutes will be referred to as '(class) period'.
6. A period with the same structure is described in Kasper (1986).
7. Krumm (1987) has adopted A. C. Wagner's model for a proposal for inservice teacher training. An action-oriented model for psychological changes is discussed in Krak (1987).

References

All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas

I think it is nice when we have group work, if we are allowed to speak Finnish among ourselves even if the teacher does not understand. Some Swedish teachers start shouting, they say we *have* to speak Swedish . . . Yes, but I do understand the teachers too, that they feel frustrated when they don't understand what we say. In the beginning they thought that we said nasty things about them, even when we told them we didn't talk about them at all, we only discussed those matters we were supposed to discuss in group work. (18C8, 12)

Our class? It is not different. We speak Finnish. No, but it does not differ much, except that we of course use *both* languages. That is something they don't do. It does not differ from Swedish classes in any other way. (10C13)

We can think about things in two different ways, in a Swedish way and a Finnish way. So you can look at the same thing from two different directions. (3C14)

We can compare. We have anyhow in some way seen something of two different lives. Or we know and can think in both Finnish and Swedish, and then compare a bit. Exactly that, one is able to compare so much more. (13C20)

You asked which country I would *not* like to live in. At least not in countries where there is a war. And not in countries where they force minority peoples to speak the language which that country

has, countries where they are not allowed to speak their own language, I would absolutely never want to live in such a country. (14C18)

## Introduction 1

These extracts come from interviews with the 15-year old co-researchers in the project 'The education of the Finnish minority in Sweden', its subproject 'Communication strategies of Finnish youngsters in Sweden'. In my opinion they are indicative of the metacultural awareness part of their bicultural competence. This awareness may enhance their capacity to solve problems in communication. It may also make them more aware of the nature of the problems which they as members of an ethnic minority group meet when they negotiate about their right to communicate with representatives of the Swedish society on an equal basis. It may make them more aware of the linguistic and cultural assimilationist demands which they encounter. It may help them to develop a bilingual bicultural ethnically conscious competence, which they can use in negotiating about the right not to assimilate, and to be part of a national ethnic minority.

When planning the subproject, I used as a tentative definition of *communication strategies* one developed by Claus Færch and Gabriele Kasper (1983a: 36): 'potentially conscious plans set up by the learner in order to solve problems in communication'. I was going to investigate Finnish youngsters, born in Sweden, who had had nine years of Finnish-medium education in Sweden. I assumed that neither Finnish nor Swedish was a foreign language for them. I assumed that their linguistic competence in both Finnish and Swedish would be at native or close to native level, since their education was in Finnish and since they were supposed to be able to continue their education through the medium of Swedish after grade 9. I did not see them as 'learners' in a strict sense, any more than monolingual teenagers (14-16 years) are learners of their L1. Monolinguals also experience problems in communication and set up (potentially conscious) plans to solve them. My hypothesis was that these bilingual youngsters had probably experienced more problematical communication situations than monolinguals, in both languages, and therefore they might have developed more efficient communication strategies for solving them than monolinguals. In setting out to explore this, I also decided to train the youngsters as co-researchers, because I thought that they might be able to observe and to talk about their strategies, without this exercise

necessarily changing the strategies, since they would be so well learned already.

During the project the focus changed, however, as a result of trying to take the consequences of seeing communication, ethnic identity and integration as *relations*. If *communication* is seen as sustaining a relation, with minimally two parties, who negotiate about meaning, a prerequisite for understanding what the parties do is to know something about this relation itself. It seemed to be pretty meaningless to study communication strategies at a micro-level, in a more 'technical' sense, without knowing more about the macro-level communication context. Under what conditions did these Finnish youngsters in Sweden communicate and how did these conditions differ from those for the more or less monolingual and monocultural peers? Their specific ethnic identity as bilingual and bicultural is at the heart of the difference.

*Identity* is not a static characteristic of a person. It is a matter for negotiation. Most identity researchers would probably agree with that. But it seems to me that we have not taken the consequences of this view fully, just as we have not taken fully the consequences of communication and the communicative competence of a person in fact being a relation, where both parties have to be studied. Isolated utterances by one party only do not constitute valid data this claim, which I feel we should accept, would invalidate much of the research done until now in second language acquisition ...

Most researchers describe the *ethnic identity* of a minority member as a *characteristic* of the person. Some see it as a more or less stable characteristic, some as more dynamic and changing. If we really see identity as a relation, a matter for negotiation, then it is not even enough that all the parties who participate in the negotiation process are considered in defining the ethnic identity of somebody. If ethnic identity is treated as a *relation*, it presupposes that other people's categorisations are part of somebody's ethnic identity, maybe not directly, but in some way yet to be specified.

This conceptualisation of ethnic identity changed the focus of research. When identity is seen as a stable characteristic of a person, that person is to be studied. When it is seen as changing through negotiation, but still a characteristic in the people who do the negotiating, both these people (for instance a minority member and a majority member) are to be studied. But when ethnic identity is seen as a relation, not a characteristic, the conditions for negotiation become a vital object of study, in addition to the people negotiating. This also means that we

have to consider the power relationship between the two parties who negotiate somebody's ethnic identity.

Finns in Sweden are the largest labour migrant minority in Scandinavia. As the first labour migrant group in Europe, they are now negotiating with the Swedish state about a status as a national ethnic minority group. The Swedish response until now has been that they are immigrants, not an ethnic minority group. In this context, ethnicity has become one of the most salient features in the communication between the Finns in Sweden and others. Instead of studying micro-level communication strategies I focussed on conditions for communication about ethnicity, at both micro- and macro-levels. First I will present a condensed version of a part of the theoretical framework used. Then a few empirical results from interview questions about ethnic self-identification will be analysed.

### Ethnic Group and Endoethnonyms

First I have to discuss some of the concepts which are central for interpreting labels of ethnic identity. I start by discussing *ethnic groups* and *ethnonyms*, names ethnic groups use to describe themselves. Then I relate these to stages in the process of *integration*.

Following Allardt, I specify the criteria for an *ethnic group* as (1) self-categorisation (self-identification), (2) common descent ('real' or imagined), (3) specific cultural traits, for instance language, and (4) a social organisation for interaction both within the group and with people outside the group (Allardt & Starck, 1981: 43). According to Allardt there are no criteria for membership in an ethnic group that would hold for *all* the members, but at least *part* of the members must fulfil *all* the criteria before one can speak of an ethnic group, and *every* member must fulfil at least *one* of them. Often most members fulfil all the criteria.

There are also a number of 'ethnic lukewarms' and 'ethnic self-haters' who do not self-categorise as members (even if they are, according to both other criteria and other-categorisations, exo-ethnonyms). On the other hand, external definitions which do not agree with people's own categorisations, are, according to many researchers, 'experienced as an insult to basic human rights' (e.g. Liebkind, 1984: 19). From a human rights point of view then, people's subjective self-identification should be decisive. But treating ethnicity as a relation also changes the human rights argument, since exo-ethnonyms are part of ethnicity. Rather it should then be a human right that the process where the validity of an exo-

ethnonym and an endo-ethnonym for the same group is being negotiated is based on equality of power for the parties to define the world.

Ethnic identity can be expressed linguistically in self-categorisation through an *endo-ethnonym*, a term which a member of an 'ethnos', an ethnic group, uses when describing herself (Bromley, 1984). The opposite is *exo-ethnonym*, a name used by others when describing (a member of) an ethnos. If ethnic identity is a relation, then the negotiation process in which the identity is constructed includes some kind of validation by both parties. If everybody, including myself, agrees that I am X and accepts and respects that identification, I may forget about my identity being a relation, and I may start looking at my endo-ethnonym as a stable characteristic which is part of me. But if I claim that I am X, and (some) others claim that I am Y, i.e. the endo-ethnonym and the exo-ethnonym do not coincide, my *ethnic-identity-for-others* (= what I tell others that I am) may become conflictual, and I may have to become aware of the fact that ethnic identity is a relational concept, involving a power struggle about the right to define me. If I am strong enough, I may still, after negotiating with *myself* anew, insist for *myself* that I am X. Then this endo-ethnonym only describes my *ethnic-identity-for-self*. Even if I may continue to claim even with those who do *not* accept that I am X, that I in fact *am* X anyway, i.e. I do not change the endo-ethnonym in presenting myself to others, the conflictual negotiation process may still, in time, change my ethnic identification and assist assimilation, because of the unequal access to power in the relation unless I succeed in mobilising strategies for resistance. These strategies can be called *ethnic strategies*, and defined, modifying Færch & Kasper, as potentially conscious plans set up by a member of an ethnic (minority) group in order to solve problems in negotiating (the validity of) her endo-ethnonym (so that it does not conflict with the exo-ethnonym). This article is about the expression of these ethnic strategies in self-identification.

### Integration and Bicultural Competence

When looking at labels Which minorities use of themselves, we are dealing with one (language-related) aspect of the conscious, subjective self-defined intraindividual or interindividual personal and social identities (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987: 20ff for an elaboration). Self-identification in general will here be seen as a *part of the affective component of a bilingual/bicultural competence*. I analyse bilingual/bicultural competence in terms of *four components* or constituents: cognitive, affective, behavioural and metacultural (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1983: 61-8;

1985a; 50-2). Culture is here defined as both the material and the ideological ways in which a group organises, understands and reproduces its life as a group.

The COGNITIVE/intellectual/scholastic/literary component relates to *knowledge* about the relevant culture. I see, following Smolicz (1979), language as a possible *core value* in many cultures, including the Finnish. Therefore the knowledge component of cultural competence includes knowledge of the language/languages pertaining to that culture unless the capacity to speak the language has been lost, the linguistic heritage 'stolen' (see especially Fishman's discussion of this in Fishman (1977), and Marainen's (1988) example, and an analysis of this and similar experience, and, for linguistic human rights in general, Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson (1986b; 1987; 1989)). The AFFECTIVE/empathetic/identificational component relates to deep, positive *feelings* about and *attitudes* towards a culture, an understanding of it from the inside, and an *identification* with it or parts of it, including acceptance of (most of) its norms and values (or feeling so strongly about them that abandoning them requires a lot of emotional effort). The BEHAVIOURAL component relates to the capacity to act in culturally appropriate ways with members of a given cultural group. METACULTURAL AWARENESS, which includes metalinguistic awareness, relates to an understanding of the distinctiveness and relativity of one's own (and other) cultures and languages, consciously being able to reflect over one's own and other cultures, at times distancing oneself from them and looking at them as objects.

Developing from a guest worker group to an immigrant group to a national ethnic minority should, assuming a simplified theoretical startingpoint, involve a development from a monolingual/monocultural competence to a bilingual/bicultural competence as a prerequisite for the development of a new synthesised competence, characteristic of real integration. When considering the steps which are taken by an immigrant in the gradual process of becoming (or failing to become) linguistically/culturally competent in a new culture which she has moved to, I posit a succession of phases, beginning with exclusion or segregation, moving through functional adaptation and acculturation to a 'final' dynamic phase.

In this chain, the final stage can be integration, assimilation or marginality. These three can be discussed as some kind of more or less static end results of a process, i.e. as products. This is often done within what I call mono-norm frameworks, which tend to see more or less monolingual/monocultural societies as preferable or inevitable (for



TABLE 21.  
*Possible phases in cultural assimilation/integration/marginality*

	<i>Original Culture</i>				<i>New Culture</i>			
	<i>knowledge</i>	<i>affective</i>	<i>behavioural</i>	<i>metacultural awareness</i>	<i>knowledge</i>	<i>affective</i>	<i>behavioural</i>	<i>metacultural awareness</i>
Segregation	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
Functional adaptation	+	+	+	-	-/+	-	-/+	-/+
Acculturation	+	+	+	-/+	+	-	+	+/-
Integration	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Assimilation	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	-/+
Marginality	-/+	-	-/+	-/+	-/+	+	+	-/+
2nd Generation marginality	-/+	-	-/+	-	-/+	-/+	+/-	-

Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1983b: 71

criticism of this view see e.g. Kachru, 1988; Pattanayak, 1988) and which put the burden of integration largely on the immigrants/minority members. In contrast to these, frameworks which see linguistic and cultural pluralism as a natural and desirable human ecological principle in societies, see integration as a *mutual* process which necessarily involves changes in both or all groups involved. I define 'integration' according to such a framework, following Drobizheva & Gouboglo (1986) as 'formation of a series of common features in an ethnically heterogeneous group'. Table 21.1 considers cultural competence in relation to each phase.

Following Drobizheva & Gouboglo (1986), I take INTEGRATION, from the Finnish labour migrant minority's point of view in Sweden, to mean that the Finnish minority has formed common features with the Swedish majority so that they share some of the cultural competence that the Swedes have, as regards three components of cultural competence, cognitive (including language), affective and behavioural, in addition to having (retained) common features with the Finnish majority in Finland so that they share some of the cultural competence that the Finns in Finland have, as regards three components of cultural competence, cognitive (including language), affective and behavioural. In addition, integration also entails a higher degree of metacultural awareness *vis-*

*à-vis* both cultures than the metacultural awareness possessed by representatives of the Swedish or the Finnish source cultures. This may in time lead to new features in the ethnic minority's culture, so that it develops specific cultural traits not found in any of the source cultures.

If an immigrated group is ready to integrate or has integrated in the production society according to the definitions above, we can conclude that it is ready to form a national ethnic minority group which as a group possesses the characteristics specified above.

But since integration in Drobizheva & Gouboglo's view includes both the majority population and all the other minority groups too (common features in an ethnically *heterogeneous* group, i.e. a group comprising all the different ethnoses), we cannot speak of *real* integration before the Swedish majority group has also acquired new features. Here too integration should be discussed as a group phenomenon, an individual phenomenon, and a relation. My contention is that many *individual* Swedes have, because of immigration, acquired new features in their cultural competence. As a *group*, though, Swedes have changed little, and there do not seem to be many signs of a willingness to change either. One of the necessary changes would be to accept the same type of expressions of ethnicity in minority members which the Swedes accept for themselves, for instance maintenance of language and culture. In fact assimilationist demands have increased over the last few years, as many observers have noted (e.g. Hyltenstam, 1986; Peura, 1988; Fägerlind & Eriksson, 1989; Westin, 1988).

If this interpretation is correct, it means that the Swedish unwillingness to change would be *an effective hindrance in the integration process of ethnic minorities. Indeed it might be a hindrance to the development of national ethnic minorities*. It would be an extremely efficient strategy for a country which does not *want* to have national ethnic minorities: first the majority society prevents, by its own unwillingness to change, the integration which is a prerequisite for the development of national ethnic minorities. Then it says to the minority: *you* have not had the will to form national minorities. This is in fact what the most prominent Swedish civil servant with responsibility for immigration policy, Jonas Widgren (1986a; 1986b), has claimed. The strategy of blaming the victim is a familiar one from minority education (see Cummins, 1984). The above description is my interpretation of the Swedish situation today. The relation of integration is conflictual.

The question of whether the second generation of immigrants has assimilated or not, has to be studied in the context of what kind of

possibilities Swedish society gives to them *not* to assimilate. Likewise, the question of whether the Finns have formed a national ethnic minority has to be studied in the context of whether Sweden allows them to define themselves as and to feel themselves as a national ethnic minority. Are they allowed to have positive affective feelings towards both countries, cultures and languages and express this through an ethnic identification which reflects integration and a bilingual/bicultural competence? Are they allowed to express this (also linguistically) in all contexts, without negative sanctions? Is the endo-ethnonym, including the linguonym (denoting a speaker of a certain language) for a national ethnic minority, interpreted by the Swedish negotiation partners, including the state, as an expression of a positive, valued linguistic and cultural competence? Is the minority member's ethnic-identity-for-self also allowed to be ethnic-identity-for-others? My tentative answer to all these questions on the basis of this empirical study is no.

But as Allardt's discussion indicates, *all* of the members of an ethnic minority group do not need to identify with the group for this group to be an ethnic group. All the Finns in Sweden thus do not need to feel themselves part of an ethnic minority, nor do they need to give a self-categorisation which indicates membership in the ethnic group. All of them do not even need to be integrated for Finns to be a national ethnic minority group. It is also perfectly possible to accept the view that self-categorisation is an important defining characteristic of an ethnic group, and at the same time also maintain that this need not be expressed verbally, in the labels the group members use about themselves. The metacultural awareness necessary for recognising what the specific cultural traits formed by the group are (the traits which set it apart from both the original culture and certain traits in the new country's majority culture) may take a long time to develop. It is, though, a necessary prerequisite for a distinct *verbalisation* of the new ethnic identity in self-categorisation. Thus *not* using a label in self-categorisation which expresses a national minority identity, does not necessarily mean that the affective component of a double cultural competence would not be present. *Becoming aware* of it and *expressing it verbally* may come much later than the *existence* of it.

#### Self-Identification Labels as Reflectors of the Degree of Integration Readiness

If we want to use the self-identification of Finnish parents and youngsters in Sweden as evidence for their degree of readiness to integrate

into Swedish society and for their degree of minority ethnicity, we have to posit a relationship between these. The identification given by a parent or a youngster could thus indicate something about the state at which the person is in the process of becoming ready to play *their* part in the integration or in the formation of a national ethnic minority.

It would seem probable that the *same* self-identification has different meanings for the parent generation and the younger generation. It would seem logical, for instance, that labelling oneself 'completely Finnish' must entail at least different amounts of experience of Finland for somebody who has and somebody who has not grown up in Finland. The *same label* may indicate different stages for different people and generations, and, correspondingly, the *same stage* may lead to different self-categorisation labels for different people and generations.

In order to be able to place somebody in relation to the stages, we need, in addition to the self-identification (*affective component*) to know something about the person's knowledge of both cultures (*cognitive component*) and her behaviour (*behavioural component*). In the behavioural component we need to know both to what extent the person *is able* to behave according to the norms of both cultures (or thinks that she is able to), and to what extent she *is willing* to do so; this might be indicative of the metacultural awareness needed to start developing and formulating the 'specific cultural traits' of a new ethnic minority in the making.

In order to be able to interpret what a person means when using a certain self-identification, we need to know how she theorises about similarities and differences between the two cultures and the meaning of identity. This is included in what we have termed her *metacultural awareness*. This type of data has been collected and analysed in the project, and the few summary conclusions presented here are based on this.

With all the horizontal and vertical variation possible in self-categorisation labels in mind, the question on which the self-categorisation analysis is based was for the CRs (co-researchers, the youngsters) as follows:

21. How would you describe yourself

for yourself

for your friends

for an unknown adult

for an unknown peer of the same sex as you

for an unknown peer of the opposite sex

Use the scale below (21A-21H)

21A Completely Swedish

21B Completely XX (XX=)

21C Swedish, but also XX (XX=)

21D XX, but also Swedish (XX=)

21E Both Swedish and XX (XX=)

21F XX who lives in Sweden (XX)

21G Sweden-XX (XX=) (for example Sweden-Greek)

21H Something else, what?

22. Does the way you describe yourself depend on

a. what the partner's mother tongue is

b. in which country you are

How do these things influence you? Write the response separately for a and b!

In addition, both the parents and the youngsters were asked about their relationship to both countries (Finland and Sweden) and both languages (Finnish and Swedish). The question about Finnish was as follows for the parents, and the same question was asked about Swedish:

97. What is the Finnish language for you? For the mother?

98. For the father?

99. For the child, in the mother's estimation?

100. For the child, in the father's estimation?

A. Home language B. Mother tongue C. A second language D. A foreign language

The same question was asked about the countries (What is Finland/Sweden for the mother?, etc.), with the following alternatives: A. Home country B. Housing country C. Birth country D. Former country E. Foreign country F. Fatherland (see Skutnabb-Kangas (1987) for these literal translations from Finnish). In addition the parents were asked what they *hoped* the languages and countries would be for the children. After that they were told that their children had in fact already been asked, and they were invited to *guess* what the child had said, and motivate why. Also, if there was a difference between the parent's wish and guess, they were asked to elaborate. The children were asked approximately the same questions. They were also asked what they thought that their parents would hope that they would answer. Space does not permit me to present results from the replies to these questions (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987), but the conclusions are based on an analysis of them too.

A tentative hypothesis about a possible development of self-identification for both generations was collated on the basis of both theory and earlier empirical studies, especially the interviews in Hujanen (1986). It explored what self-categorisations Finns in Sweden might use during different phases, and indicated what the self-categorisations could tell about the affective component of their cultural competence, i.e. their relative loyalty towards the old and the new culture. In fact, the interviews proved that a few of the hypotheses were completely wrong. A summary of them will be presented, with warnings where the data did not validate them, and some comments on what was validated.

For the *first generation*, who have grown up in Finland, being COMPLETELY FINNISH is a self-evident starting point, even if being that may be (1) different from what it means for them after a long time away from Finland, (2) different from what it means for the second generation, and (3) connected with a low degree of general awareness of what Finnishness implies. Thus the self-identification in the SEGREGATION phase would be 'completely Finnish'. This could in fact not be investigated, because there were no parents or youngsters who, on the basis of their cultural competence, could be seen as segregated.

The same self-identification would continue through the FUNCTIONAL ADAPTATION phase even if a certain metacultural awareness about Swedish culture would have started to develop.

In the ACCULTURATION phase the metacultural awareness of Finnish culture would develop to the extent that there might be a need to make some kind of differentiation between Finns who live in Finland and Finns who live in Sweden. At the same time the Swedish culture would not be internalised to the extent of demanding any loyalty. The self-identification would thus be 'Finn who lives in Sweden'. Some might also use some sort of an individualistic designation, trying out different identities.

The label for self-identification need not change even if a person feels ready for full INTEGRATION. It seems to depend on the degree of openness of a society, to what extent there is a possibility to adopt some other identity which is at the same time an accepted mainstream identity but *not* a symbol of assimilation. If this is not possible (and as described earlier I doubt whether it is in Sweden) then it may provide security to maintain the 'Finn who lives in Sweden' label. In a conflict situation where there are no positive identity options, sticking to Finnishness and to a label which can be interpreted as reflecting temporariness, can thus function defensively. The label 'Finnish but also

Swedish' might also be used (and by some already in the acculturation phase). Many want to retain their Finnishness or think that they will stay Finns regardless of what happens. But something of the Swedishness also rubs off, so that they become a bit Swedish in addition to being Finns. This may become clear for many in connection with visits back to Finland where they may feel that *they* have changed while the Finns have not.

'Finnish but also Swedish' may easily lead to 'Swedish but also Finnish' (because the Finnishness is (almost) impossible to get rid of). And ultimately the assimilation pressure would lead to 'completely Swedish' as the self-identification, feeling ashamed of one's Finnish origin, etc. Both 'completely Swedish' and 'completely Finnish' may also imply MARGINALITY. Different types of 'neither X nor Y' designations may also show this.

All these hypotheses were supported by the data. Even if all the parents felt ready to integrate, the chronological development could be seen in the discussions about the interpretation of the labels.

But the last hypothesis (about labels in the integration phase) did *not* get support. It went like this: in societies which are as strongly assimilation-oriented as Sweden is, it may be extremely difficult to counterpoise in relation to the two cultures if one wants to integrate on one's own premises, without becoming assimilated. It is necessary to emphasise one's own culture strongly, because the risk of being 'swamped' by Swedish culture is so overwhelming. Therefore it may be impossible to identify as 'both Swedish and Finnish' for the first generation, because of the combination of discrimination, if you are not 'completely Swedish', and the assimilation pressure. It may be a constant struggle against becoming 'completely Swedish to the exclusion of the Finnish', if one tries to be 'both Finnish and Swedish'. In a society which is racist without being aware of its own racism, and where the ethnic consciousness of the majority population is low, a *political metacultural awareness* of the importance of the minority culture may be the only feasible way of integrating successfully for a first generation immigrant. Thus 'Sweden-Finn' might be the self-identification only for those who are conscious of the political dimensions of minority ethnicity, in a country which is monoethnically and monolingually oriented.

Thus I had a tentative hypothesis that identifying as 'both Swedish and Finnish' (or 'both Finnish and Swedish') means a high degree of awareness of the more *general* cultural dimensions of minority ethnicity, while identifying as 'Sweden-Finn' means a high degree of consciousness of the *political* dimensions of minority ethnicity. This would parallel the



distinction between ethnic awareness and ethnic consciousness (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987). This hypothesis in fact proved to be completely wrong, because of the varying interpretations of Sweden-Finn.

For the *second* generation there seems to be a much wider choice of labels to indicate integration. The second generation would be in a better position to choose a double identification. I hypothesised that their identification would be much more variable than that of the parent generation. But the interpretation of the labels is even more difficult for the second generation, because identity for them has to be negotiated in a society which may send extremely conflicting messages, which they experience more directly in the schools than the parents at their places of work. *Both becoming and being multi-identical is a constant struggle in a monosociety.*

This theoretical framework has been applied to a few results in the project. Here I can only mention some of the interpretations of 'a Finn who lives in Sweden' and 'completely Finnish' (which were assumed to possibly signal segregation) and 'Sweden-Finn' (which was assumed to signal integration), but the conclusions are based on a more comprehensive analysis of the material.

## Results

Thirty-one parents and their 18 youngsters were interviewed twice in 1986-7. All the interviews were taped and most have been transcribed. The first parent interviews took between three and nine hours (the average was three to four hours), the second two to four hours. The youngster interviews lasted about an hour. The youngsters, in grades 8-9 during the project, i.e. aged 14-16, were trained as co-researchers (CR). The project has a huge amount of data about them and their parents, including observational data and tests. The identity questions analysed have also been answered by a Sweden Finnish control group (30 of the youngsters' classmates), and by a Swedish control group (53 youngsters in parallel classes in the same schools). For the Finnish test I also have control group data from Finland.'

Parents of eight CRs (40%) are divorced, and the child lives with the mother. One father and one mother have died. Eleven of the children (i.e. 55%) live together with both biological parents. In six cases the mother has remarried or lives with a new partner, so 16 of the CRs (80%) live in two-parent families, one with the father and three (15%) with the mother only. The parents have working class occupations, with

very few exceptions. One mother was a housewife, two fathers were on early retirement because of injuries on the job, the rest of the parents were gainfully employed, most of them with cleaning or in factories. Most of them have eight to nine years of basic education (the eldest has four years only), and about half of the parents have no vocational training. Most of the CRs were born in Sweden, and thus their parents represent a group that has been in Sweden for over 16 years. The parents are representative of Finns in Sweden in most respects, except for the fact that their children are in Finnish medium education only some 20% of Finnish children are.

In relation to the *cognitive* and *behavioural* characteristics, the first generation, the parents, have acquired a high degree of competence in Swedish culture, according to their own evaluation, including competence in the Swedish language, which was also tested. They also express sympathy towards Sweden and Swedishness, even if they are critical too, meaning that they have (at least) a certain degree of *affective* competence in Swedish culture. They thus share some of the cultural competence that the Swedes have, as regards three components (cognitive, affective and behavioural) of cultural competence. At the same time they are still competent in Finnish culture. They have a high degree of *cognitive* (including linguistic) and *behavioural* competence in Finnish culture. They identify as Finnish, either exclusively or in addition to other identities. They thus have a high degree of *affective* competence in Finnish culture too. In addition they have a high degree of *metacultural awareness* (including metalinguistic awareness) *vis-à-vis* both cultures, a fact which sometimes may make them follow a wish *not* to behave according to the norms of any of the cultures involved (see Blum-Kulka, this volume, for a similar observation).

The second generation, the youngsters, are also competent in those *cognitive* aspects of cultural competence which have to do with linguistic competence in both the Finnish and Swedish languages. In the *Finnish test* (modified after Cziko (Cziko & Lin, 1984); for details see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987) they did almost as well as the Finland Finnish control group. In the parallel *Swedish test* they did as well as the Swedish control group, in fact slightly better (but the difference is not statistically significant). (This result is also interesting because the Swedish controls were mainly middle class.) Their school achievement was as good as that of the Swedish control group. In those *affective* aspects which have to do with self-categorisation, they show loyalty to and identification with both Sweden and Finland. Their *behavioural* competence, which has-been observed in a variety of situations, is high too. They share a high degree

of cultural competence with representatives of both cultures. In addition their *metalinguistic* awareness is high, as judged by the communication strategies questions in one of the questionnaires which they completed, some tests, and observations throughout the training sessions. Their general *metacultural* (non-linguistic) awareness seems to be high too (for details of all these findings see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987).

The Finnish parents and youngsters have thus formed common features with the Swedish majority and retained (first generation) or acquired (second generation) common features with the Finnish majority in Finland, as regards three of the components of cultural (including linguistic) competence. In addition they have a high metacultural (and/or metalinguistic) awareness *vis-à-vis* both cultures (and/or languages). Thus both the parents and their children must be considered ready for integration in Swedish society, according to the criteria used to operationalise integration here. There is no evidence of social segregation or temporariness of stay in the parent generation, and thus no evidence for the claims about foot, heart and suitcase being in the 'wrong' place (as claimed by Widgren (1986): one foot in each country, the suitcase packed in the corner and the heart in Finland). There is no evidence of social assimilation in the youngster generation, and thus no evidence of turning their back on the inheritance of the parents, or of more loyalty towards Swedishness (also claimed by Widgren). *The prerequisites for forming a national ethnic minority thus exist*, when judged on the basis of a study of this group of parents and youngsters.

Next we look at the replies to the self-identification questions, in order to see whether the Finnish youngsters and parents in fact *express* an integrated identity of a national ethnic minority. The CRs have used all other categories except 'completely Swedish' when giving a self-categorisation 'for themselves'. The double identification categories (c-e) get 60% of the responses and the 'more Finnish' categories (b, f-g) get 40%. The identification 'for friends' shows more preference for the double identification categories, 70%. But not even for friends do any of the CRs identify as 'completely Swedish'. See Table 21.2.

There is some pressure to conform to Swedishness among friends.

The 'Swedish' control group turned out not to be completely Swedish either. 30% have a parent or grandparent from other cultures. Many of them use another ethnic identification only for themselves, and all of them identify themselves for most other people as 'completely Swedish'. It seems that it is easier to resist this pressure and to develop a bicultural (rather than monocultural) identity in a mother tongue medium class.

TABLE 21.2  
Self-identification of the CRs for different people, percentages

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	compl	compl	Sw b	Fi b	Both	Fi lives	Sweden
	Sw	Fi	also	Fialso	SwSw & Fi	in Sw	Finn
for self		10	20	25	10	20	10
friends		15	25	15	30	5	10
unknown adult	10	5	10	20	20	25	10
	10	10	10	20	25	15	10
unknown peer, same sex							
	10	10	10	15	30	15	10
unknown peer, opposite sex							

This is illustrated by a reply to question 35 ('Have you ever been teased for your Finnishness/for being bilingual? How did you feel? What did you do?') by one of the Finnish youngsters in the interview:

Never. I have never been teased because of that. But I think that too depends on there always having been so many of us. I have always been in a Finnish medium class, and I have always had Finnish friends and so on, so nobody has been able to. We have always been . . . so that there are several of us. Just like now, you know, half the school is Finnish, so you can't really discriminate anybody there because of their Finnishness. So I don't have any personal experience of discrimination, no. And I wouldn't really mind either if somebody should happen to try. (17C7-8).

Ethnic-identity-for-self and ethnic-identity-for-others have more chance of matching up and not becoming conflictual in a mother tongue medium class. This type of class gives the youngsters more strength to assert themselves in negotiations and to dare to show their ethnic identity even among Swedish friends. By contrast, a submersion class succeeds in making Swedes of everybody in their ethnic-identity-for-others, and prevents the forming of national ethnic minorities.

The self-categorisation questions for parents were almost identical to the ones asked of their children. Instead of 'peers' they were asked about friends and about colleagues at work, both Finnish, Swedish and people from other countries, and the gender of the communication partner was omitted. The most common response in the identification for self for

the mothers, 58% (N = 19), is 'Finn who lives in Sweden', followed by 'Sweden-Finn' (21%). Only one mother says she is 'completely Finnish', and one (she had been in Sweden several years as a child during the war and spoke both Swedish and Finnish during the interview) that she is 'completely Swedish', while two give 'Swedish but also Finnish'. The 11 fathers who answered this question are more evenly distributed among the different labels.

Most parents arrive at a final identification after a lengthy discussion many were thinking aloud and trying out the various alternatives. Many of them express the view that the question is difficult. Many reason at length, and argue for their choice. The following extract shows well the pondering before the mother chooses 'completely Finnish':

It was a really difficult question. I have you see I am a Finn anyway but I *am* a Finn yes I *am* 'a Finn . . . who lives in Sweden' . . . probably. But yes I like Swedish people also and I do try a bit to adapt, with them too. What if it was that 'Finnish but also Swe . . . ', no, I don't know . . . 'both Swedish and Finnish' . . . sometimes that feels right too but I wouldn't take that . . . 'a Finn who lives in Sweden' . . . I wouldn't really take that either actually, because I have adapted to this quite well . . . 'Finnish but also Swedish', something like that could . . . no . . . (laughs) . . . that 'completely Finnish', that might be near the closest probably anyway. When I really, myself, think of myself, then I am still completely Finnish anyway. (13M4, P73)

The results for the youngsters show that there is no evidence for the claim by Jonas Widgren (1986a; 1986b) that the second generation 'have turned their backs on the cultural heritage of their parents' if this is measured by how they categorise themselves for themselves, i.e. ethnic-identity-for-self. Quite the opposite: (1) there is a tendency for the youngsters to be more completely Finnish than their parents, (2) they are not more Swedish than their parents, and (3) they do not tend to exclude their Finnish identity, they have it either as an exclusive identity or as an additional identity. At the same time they also choose more of the double identity categories (c + d + e) than their parents. The mothers only have 11% of them, and the fathers 18%, while 40% of the second generation youngsters choose them.

Only five of the 19 mothers and none of the fathers give the same identification as their own child. Two mothers (N = 19) and two fathers (N = 11) have *wished* the child to have the identification which the child *has* chosen. Three mothers and three fathers have *guessed* right. All these

are in different families. The parents express few 'more Swedish-minded' wishes, but they do not wish either that their children should feel 'completely Finnish'. On the other hand their assessments of what they think the children have chosen include many double identification choices, and fewer of the 'more Finnish-minded' ones than the parental wishes do.

The second part of the question was: Do the Finns in fact *feel* like a national ethnic minority? The common interpretation among researchers would be that hyphenated labels are the ones denoting a national ethnic minority, labels like Greek-Australian or Finland-Swede (which are in fact in use). A *Sweden-Finn* would thus be the label chosen by a person of Finnish origin, permanently settled in Sweden, well integrated, and feeling herself part of a national ethnic minority.

This self-categorisation is *not* prevalent among the parents or the youngsters in this study. Only a quarter of the parents and 10% of the youngsters chose it. If we were to answer the question: 'Do Finns in Sweden see themselves as a national ethnic minority?' exclusively on the basis of the self-categorisation responses which the parents have marked on the questionnaire, we might say: 'No, they don't, because so few of them choose to categorise themselves as Sweden-Finns'. We might conclude that Finns in Sweden, as represented by the parents and youngsters in this study, do not see themselves as a permanent ethnic minority in Sweden. Jonas Widgren would then be right in his claim about the Finns lacking the will to form a national ethnic minority, a claim which is now used as a basis for starting to undermine some of the basic progressive goals in Swedish immigration policy (see the interview with Widgren (1986b) about this).

This would, though, be a hasty interpretation. When examining the responses, it becomes very clear from the argumentation that the label 'Sweden-Finn' is interpreted in a number of different ways by the parents, and few of them correspond to the researcher's way of interpreting it. The interpretations of the other labels by parents and youngsters alike strengthen this impression. And the long explanations in connection with the questions about what Finland and Sweden and the Finnish and Swedish languages mean for the parents and for the children, and what they wish them to mean and how they guess each others' wishes, strengthen the conclusions about the only hindrance for the forming of a national ethnic minority being the unwillingness of the Swedish negotiation partner to accept a positive bilingual, bicultural identity.

Some parents do interpret 'Sweden-Finn' as signalling a permanent minority, without attaching any negative connotations to it. But even if they have the interpretation of a permanent minority, many think that it is



impossible for the first generation to become Sweden-Finns, or that it at least would take a lot of time. 'Sweden-Finn' may be combined with some negative connotations, for instance of not being a real Finn any more. For still others, 'Sweden-Finn' means that one is more or less assimilated and does everything like the Swedes, is in Sweden 'on Sweden's conditions' as one mother puts it. Some interpretations are still more negative. 'Sweden-Finn' can be seen as somebody who is neither a Finn nor a Swede, a marginalised identity, or as somebody who is ashamed of being Finnish and tries to be Swedish, i.e. assimilation in its most negative sense.

It thus seems that the interpretations of '*Sweden-Finn*' go through the whole scale of possibilities: the label *can denote integration* (but does so to a minority of these parents) *but also assimilation and marginality*, all with different degrees of intensity. Thus we *cannot* draw the conclusion that the parents would *not* feel part of a national ethnic minority just because they have not categorised themselves as Sweden-Finns. Obviously nobody wants to select a label which s/he interprets as negative. Likewise 'a Finn in Sweden' also gets different interpretations. Some of them describe *well integrated people*, with no intention to move back to Finland, some emphasise the *temporariness*. 'Completely Finnish' can also denote extremely well integrated people, as an example above showed.

After looking at some of the interview extracts, we can conclude that it is *not* possible to conclude anything about the ethnic self-categorisation of Finns in Sweden *on the basis of the labels only* which they use of themselves, unless we know how the labels are interpreted. (This also means that questionnaires about ethnic identity are of extremely dubious value indeed.) Without knowing enough about how people theorise around ethnic identity we are not able to tell to what extent they see themselves as a national ethnic minority. (These types of analysis have been done in the project too; see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1987; forthcoming). It should be mentioned, however, that the identification chosen by most of the parents and youngsters *in their own interpretation* denotes extremely well integrated people.

But having clarified that, we have to ask ourselves if the whole story is a question of labels only. Find the right double identification labels, and harmony descends? Of course not. The interpretation of labels depends on the societies in which these labels are used. Finns do not have the power to interpret the labels *alone*, in the way *they* would like to. Negotiating about labels for self-identification is negotiating about world-views, and about whose definition of the world is valid.

It seems that identifying as something where 'Finnish' is included is



not interpreted by Swedes as a positive endo-ethnonym, denoting a valued ethnic minority identity, but as a *linguonym*. As a linguonym, 'Finnish' should, of course, denote a (positive) capacity to speak Finnish. But according to monolingual norms, a capacity to speak a *marked language* (and all non-majority languages are marked in a monolingually oriented society) is also, or even mainly, taken as indicative of the possibility that one is *not* able to speak the unmarked majority language. (Minority children are often in the United States called LEP- or NEP-children (Limited English Proficiency, No English Proficiency), i.e. they are defined in terms of what they do *not* know rather than in terms of what they are and know.) Thus the linguonym is *not* interpreted in a positive way, in line with enrichment theory, as denoting a *positive competence in an additional language*. It is interpreted negatively, according to a deficiency-theoretical interpretation, where '*Finnish*' stands for '*lack of competence in Swedish*'. This is how the deficiency hypothesis (see Skutnabb-Kangas & Leporanta-Morley, 1986) is operationalised *vis-à-vis* language: being able to speak language X is not taken to indicate a *capacity*, a competence, but rather a suspicion of *lack of capacity* to speak language Y.

In educational planning it is operationalised as a combination of L2-related handicap and L1-deprivation (see Churchill, 1986; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986b). Being 'Finnish' thus becomes an illness: to many Swedes it signals 'lack of Swedish (competence) = in need of compensatory support'. Earlier the cure was 'more Swedish'. During a phase which did not last more than some 15 years in Sweden the cure was: 'transitional Finnish leads to more Swedish'. And now the treatment is about to change again: 'freedom of choice must not be interpreted as freedom from the daily educational cumulative dose of school Swedish'.

Or is this interpretation too negative? Is a bit more Swedish not what the second generation needs in order to develop into a national ethnic minority which has a *double* competence, where the Swedish part is just as good as the Finnish part? Does not Sweden do all it can to *support* the double competence and double identity?

Since the second generation shares common cultural traits with *both* Finns in Finland *and* Swedes in Sweden, this *combination* sets them apart from both native majority group Finns in Finland and from native majority group Swedes in Sweden. The youngsters thus fulfil one of the four defining criteria for a national ethnic minority group, the '*specific cultural characteristics*'. They also fulfil the criterion of '*common descent*'. The two additional criteria which Allardt posited were a '*social organisation*' and '*self-characterisation*'. The Finnish youngsters in this study have their

own social organisation, namely Finnish-medium classes (chosen by them, not the parents, when starting lower secondary school). (The establishment of Finnish-medium classes in general was achieved as a result of a long struggle by the Finnish minority, and they still function on a temporary basis.) And we have seen that they use 'Finnish' in their self-categorisation.

If Swedish society wanted to support the development of national ethnic minority groups, it would help to organise conditions conducive to a further development of these *specific* cultural traits, this social organisation, and a positive double identification.

The specificity in a minority's cultural traits is initially the *combination* of having knowledge-related and behavioural competence in *two* languages and cultures, later on also metalinguistic and metacultural awareness and the changes which they lead to *vis-à-vis* both cultures. The part of this combination that has weaker conditions to develop and thus needs official support is of course the part represented by the minority language and culture. These are what Sweden should support.

The knowledge of the minority culture, especially the linguistic competence, seems to have a fair chance of developing fully only in mother tongue medium education which continues throughout the comprehensive school (as opposed to being transitional only). This would also be an appropriate *social organisation* for the state to support, an organisation which parents and teachers support. It would also give a good grounding for the development of the metalinguistic and metacultural skills, cultivated by bilingual and bicultural teachers. Monolingual and monocultural Swedish teachers are by definition unsuitable to teach minority children because of their low degree of this awareness. In addition, it can also develop a high competence in Swedish, as we have seen.

Affective identification develops and thrives in an atmosphere of real respect, shown in deeds. But if one party forces its own definitions of the world, including definitions of the other party's identity, even their self-identification, on another party, like representatives of Swedish authorities (including Widgren in this case) may do, this may help in clarifying power relations, but it is not especially conducive to attracting affection.

Sweden cannot do much about the *descent* of minorities. But does it support the development of the other three aspects? We could operationalise support for the second generation in relation to the three remaining aspects which characterise a national ethnic minority (1) specific cultural traits, (2) social organisation, and (3) self-categorisation in terms of (1)

opportunity to choose in all official situations whether one wants to use the mother tongue or Swedish, and opportunity to learn the mother tongue (and Swedish) fully, (2) in mother tongue medium classes throughout schooling, and (3) the right to positively express and define one's own identity oneself and have this identification accepted and respected by others. In fact these demands list what can be considered basic linguistic human rights, as can be seen by comparing them to the demands made in my proposal for linguistic human rights (see Skutnabb-Kangas, 1984; 1987; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1986b; 1987; 1989). In this sense Sweden does not do much to support the development of national ethnic minorities or to fulfil the demands for linguistic human rights. Rather the opposite.

Since language is the main cultural characteristic setting apart Finns and Swedes, the core value character of the Finnish language and its importance for self-categorisation and ethnic identity is understandable. When reminding ourselves of the fact that Swedish racism towards the inhabitants of Finland, its colony for 650 years, had to use *language* as the main basis for dividing groups to be given unequal access to power and resources (because there were few biological differences like skin colour), it also becomes more understandable that Swedish racism and ethnicism from so early on has crystallised in *linguicism*. Linguicism is defined as those

ideologies and structures which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce unequal division of power and resources (both material and non-material) between groups which are defined on the basis of language. (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986a: 45).

One strategy in linguicism is to restrict an ethnonym so that it becomes a linguonym only, and then to redefine the linguonym within a deficiency-theoretical framework (for more detailed accounts of how linguicism works see Phillipson, 1986; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986; 1987; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1986b; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1986a; 1986b; 1987).

But that also breeds defensiveness, and resistance. Thus, as long as the Swedes do not accept 'Finnish' as a *positive* official (as opposed to private) ethnonym which does *not* mean being less loyal to Sweden, and as long as 'Swedish' is an exclusive and unmarked ethnonym, Sweden cannot have national ethnic minority groups, regardless of how well integrated and ready these groups are. The Finnish minority, represented by the parents and children in this study, has the prerequisites, as has been shown. It is up to Sweden. Widgren has suggested that the Finns need self-reflection. The conclusions of this study seem to point in the other direction it is

the Swedish ethnos which needs to become conscious of itself.

I will finish with a few more quotes from the youngsters themselves:

You should feel proud because you know two languages . . . It is a good thing you know two languages. One shouldn't feel ashamed of what one is. Many people don't dare to tell that they are Finns. If you meet them somewhere, let's say in the disco, they don't dare to say that they are Finns, and some people even change their names, lie about their names so that they sound Swedish and so on. I think it is absolutely idiotic. It doesn't pay to do so. It is really disgusting. I don't like it at all that one is ashamed of what one is. One should learn one's own language really properly, and then the language of this country, and use both. And when you asked what parents should not do, they shouldn't hide their own culture, like now we are Swedes, and throw away everything of their own. Some people have done so, like some Yugoslavs, like now let's be Swedes and now let's dye our hair and so on. That is something one shouldn't do. Parents could just show up a little bit, show that now we are Finns, and so on, give a bit of some kind of pride. Of course you shouldn't become too proud, but in such a way that you are not ashamed. So the parents show that Finnishness is not a bad thing at all. And the teachers, let me think, what should they *not* do, the teachers should not discriminate. Let's say when we have both Swedish and Finnish classes, then they shouldn't be nastier to the Finnish classes, and they shouldn't prevent them from speaking their own language, you are not allowed to do stupid things like that. And discriminate and think that you are crazy you Finns, so that the teachers just shout and get fits and show that Finns are not as good as Swedes. If that continues a long time so that you lose your self-confidence, I think how you are going to manage later on depends on that quite a lot. Because then you think you are no good, so don't ever tell anybody that you are a Finn because it is such a terrible thing to be a Finn, and then you lose your self-respect, then after that you don't know any more what and who you are. That shouldn't be allowed. (17C7)

If I go shopping with my mother, for instance, then too I want to speak Finnish only with her. Then sometimes she may start talking in Swedish, and then to me it sounds in some way a bit funny, and then I might say: 'Speak Finnish'. But then she says no, people must know what we are talking about, or something like that. I think that is utterly stupid, then I feel ashamed. It is our language and we have the right to speak it. (14C10)

I think parents should speak Finnish to the child, so that it learns Finnish properly. There are many Finnish parents who don't care, but put the child in a Swedish-medium class. It would be important to talk Finnish to the child. Swedish one can learn out on the playground and with friends. Even when one is in a Finnish-medium class, one learns Swedish pretty fast. (2C3)

What parents could do or shouldn't do, that would be not to speak Swedish at home. They must speak Finnish. I think people should speak Finnish at home once they know it. I think it is somehow wrong sometimes when you go to visit a mate who knows Finnish, and then when you go there, the parents know Finnish but they speak Swedish to the child, I think that is wrong. It does *not* feel right. (12C6)

I do certainly feel that I have the Finnish language . . . Finnish is . . . it is somehow inside my innermost self, this Finnish language, but I know the Swedish language well too, so I don't need to worry at all, I know both well. (13C10)

Both languages are equally important, when you are a Finnish family in Sweden. Both are equally important. (5C15)

Important things, yes, I can of course learn them in Swedish too, but about Finnish culture you have to learn in Finnish, you don't get the sort of Finnish feeling into it otherwise. (17C10)

Always I am proud of being a Finn or a bilingual. (13C13)

Like when they say that they don't like Finns, although they don't even know any. I think it's wrong. They could try to get to know some. I think that I am at least . . . we are just like everybody else, aren't we. Maybe it is only the language that causes it, the fact that they can't grasp it. (5C22)

Sometimes, if somebody in Finland complains about the Swedes, then I might feel bad, because usually of course it is not true, it is just some sort of prejudice. But there is nothing else in Finland that wouldn't be good, no other bad sides. (14C17)

Usually I am of course a bit proud that I know two languages, and that I am from two countries so to say. Sometimes one ponders of course a bit about which *-maalainen* (*maa* = country, *ranskanmaalainen* = from France, *saksanmaalainen* = from Germany, etc. Approximately-*countrial*, Swedish *vilken -ländare*, German *welche -länderin*) one is. But one must surely be able to be 'bi-countrial' too then. (XC6) (*kaksmaalainen*, *tvåländare*, *Zweiländerin*)

This *new concept*, *tvåländare*, should be attributed to the young woman (one of the youngsters in the project) who invented it, *Kirsi Salomäki*. It

crystallises the positive ethnic strategy in the struggle for a bilingual, bicultural, bicountrial identity which these youngsters are in the middle of, in a monolingually oriented environment, hostile in deed (if not in word) to what the young minority generation is trying to achieve. The struggle can be understood as an aspect of the global restructuring of hegemony, where more sophisticated forms of racism, ethnicism (Mullard, 1985; 1986a; 1986b) and linguisticism replace the cruder biological forms of racism. The older generation has created mother-tongue-medium classes as one of the ethnic strategies which equips the young generation better in their legitimate struggle for both linguistic and other human rights. The young generation also uses ethnic strategies, persisting in their double identification, in trying to create counterhegemonies. It is a question of the minorities' legitimate instrumental *and* expressive needs, where instrumental refers to the material basis for their existence, and their share of political power, while the expressive needs have to do with the right to one's own language, culture and ethnic identity. A stress on the expressive dimension alone leads to conservative romanticism, a stress on the instrumental dimension alone to an empty shell of socialism. Both dimensions must be combined in a struggle for minority rights and that is exactly the 'pluralist dilemma' (Jayasuriya, 1986) that seems far from its solution.

One prerequisite for making Swedes see the *need* for change would be a higher degree of metacultural awareness. This might help Swedes to see some of the racist features in their own culture, which may now prevent them from seeing other cultures as equal. The metacultural awareness should include a *metalinguistic awareness* which might help Swedes see the linguisticist features in their own culture.

#### Note

1. Thanks to my awful husband for his nasty questions and remarks ('What do you mean by X'; 'You cannot say Y.').

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All references can be found in the consolidated reference list at the end of the book.



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In this index, the following abbreviations are used: EFL = English as a Foreign Language; ESL = English as a Second Language; L1 = first language; L2 = second language; SLA = second language acquisition.

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